1. **What is one rationale for the shift to an emphasis on informational text?**
   a. Literacy does not have a role in science and technology, history and social studies, or in classes focused on the Arts.
   b. The standards require that students work on literacy in all the content areas, not as a distraction or as an addition to their study of content, but to build their understanding of the content they are studying.
   c. Students must be required to read about the world even if they find it uninteresting.
   d. Reading informational text is much easier than reading literature.

2. **Close reading of text:**
   a. Is another way of describing sustained silent reading.
   b. Cannot occur until students have developed good reading comprehension.
   c. Requires students to be actively involved in the text they read.
   d. Does not appear in the CCSS for ELA/Literacy until students are in high school.

3. **What can an educator do to support all readers?**
   a. Identify the reading needs of all students.
   b. Share the responsibility for providing explicit targeted instruction.
   c. Commit to teaching every student to read complex text and read it well.
   d. All of the above

4. **Which of the following is not a dimension for determining text complexity?**
   a. Task and reader considerations
   b. Quantitative dimensions
   c. Descriptive and figurative language
   d. Qualitative dimensions

5. **Lexiles measure**
   a. An individual's reading ability or the difficulty of a text
   b. To what extent a text is informative or literary
   c. Improvement in a school’s reading scores
   d. All of the above

6. **What should students focus on when doing a close reading?**
   a. The author’s meaning, purpose, and argument
   b. The way the text is structured
   c. Gaining a deep understanding of the text
   d. All of the above
7. The CCSS for ELA/Literacy in Reading Informational Text emphasize all of the following skills EXCEPT
   a. Actively listening to a lecture that summarizes a text’s main points in a pre-reading activity
   b. Determining what the text says explicitly and cite textual evidence to support conclusions
   c. Comparing how two or more texts discuss the same topic
   d. Determining central ideas and details and being able to summarize them

8. The questions asked during a close reading
   a. Guide the reader to predict what the text will be about before the reading begins
   b. Direct the reader to better understand and analyze the text
   c. Connect the reader to a real-life situation
   d. Help the reader understand the text independently the first time

9. What does Appendix B of the CCSS contain?
   a. Writing resources for teachers
   b. Video resources for students
   c. Text exemplars and performance tasks
   d. Research that supports the new standards

10. The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards
    a. Apply to literary text
    b. Apply to informational text
    c. Apply to both informational and literary text
    d. Apply to the Career Technical Education Standards
College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards

The K-12 Common Core standards define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade. They correspond to the College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards below by number. The CCR and grade-specific standards are necessary complements—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity—that together define the skills and understandings that all students must demonstrate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READING</th>
<th>WRITING</th>
<th>SPEAKING AND LISTENING</th>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Ideas and Details</strong></td>
<td><strong>Text Types and Purposes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Comprehension and Collaboration</strong></td>
<td><strong>Conventions of Standard English</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.</td>
<td>1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</td>
<td>1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</td>
<td>1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.</td>
<td>2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</td>
<td>2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.</td>
<td>2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.</td>
<td>3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.</td>
<td>3. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.</td>
<td>Knowledge of Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.</td>
<td>4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</td>
<td>Presentations of Knowledge and Ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.</td>
<td>5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach</td>
<td>4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</td>
<td>3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.</td>
<td>6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others</td>
<td>5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.</td>
<td>Vocabulary Acquisition and Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Craft and Structure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Production and Distribution of Writing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Research to Build and Present Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.*</td>
<td>4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</td>
<td>7. Conduct short and sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.</td>
<td>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.</td>
<td>5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach</td>
<td>8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.</td>
<td>5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.</td>
<td>6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others</td>
<td>9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</td>
<td>6. Acquire and use accurately a range of general and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range of Writing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.</td>
<td>10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.</td>
<td>7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.</td>
<td>10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please see “Research to Build and Present Knowledge” in Writing and “Comprehension and Collaboration” in Speaking and Listening for additional standards relevant to gathering, assessing, and applying information from print and digital sources.

** These broad types of writing include many subgenres. See Appendix A for definitions of key writing types (found at corestandards.org).
Common Core Shifts for ELA/Literacy

1. **Building knowledge** through **content-rich nonfiction**

2. Reading, writing and speaking grounded in **evidence from text**, both literary and informational

3. Regular practice with **complex text** and its **academic language**

Summer/Fall 2012  More on the shifts at achievethecore.org.
Common Core Shifts for English Language Arts/Literacy

1. **Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction**

Building knowledge through content rich non-fiction plays an essential role in literacy and in the Standards. In K-5, fulfilling the standards requires a 50-50 balance between informational and literary reading. Informational reading primarily includes content rich non-fiction in history/social studies, science and the arts; the K-5 Standards strongly recommend that students build coherent general knowledge both within each year and across years. In 6-12, ELA classes place much greater attention to a specific category of informational text—literary nonfiction—than has been traditional. In grades 6-12, the Standards for literacy in history/social studies, science and technical subjects ensure that students can independently build knowledge in these disciplines through reading and writing.

To be clear, the Standards do require substantial attention to literature throughout K-12, as half of the required work in K-5 and the core of the work of 6-12 ELA teachers.

2. **Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational**

The Standards place a premium on students writing to sources, i.e., using evidence from texts to present careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information. Rather than asking students questions they can answer solely from their prior knowledge or experience, the Standards expect students to answer questions that depend on their having read the text or texts with care. The Standards also require the cultivation of narrative writing throughout the grades, and in later grades a command of sequence and detail will be essential for effective argumentative and informational writing.

Likewise, the reading standards focus on students’ ability to read carefully and grasp information, arguments, ideas and details based on text evidence. Students should be able to answer a range of text-dependent questions, questions in which the answers require inferences based on careful attention to the text.

3. **Regular practice with complex text and its academic language**

Rather than focusing solely on the skills of reading and writing, the Standards highlight the growing complexity of the texts students must read to be ready for the demands of college and careers. The Standards build a staircase of text complexity so that all students are ready for the demands of college- and career-level reading no later than the end of high school. Closely related to text complexity—and inextricably connected to reading comprehension—is a focus on academic vocabulary: words that appear in a variety of content areas (such as ignite and commit).

More on the shifts at achievethecore.org
READING STANDARDS FOR INFORMATIONAL TEXT K-5

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year and help ensure that students gain adequate exposure to a range of texts and tasks. Rigor is also infused through the requirement that students read increasingly complex texts through the grades. Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year’s grade specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergartners:</th>
<th>Grade 1 Students:</th>
<th>Grade 2 Students:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Ideas and Details</strong></td>
<td><strong>Craft and Structure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.</td>
<td>1. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.</td>
<td>1. Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.</td>
<td>2. Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.</td>
<td>2. Identify the main topic of a multiparagraph text as well as the focus of specific paragraphs within the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.</td>
<td>3. Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.</td>
<td>3. Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Craft and Structure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text. (See grade K Language standards 4-6 on page 13 for additional expectations.)</td>
<td>4. Know and use various text structures (e.g., sequence) and text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents, glossaries, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text.</td>
<td>10. Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.</td>
<td>5. Know and use various text features (e.g., captions, bold print, subheadings, glossaries, indexes, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently.</td>
<td>10. Activate prior knowledge related to the information and events in texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.</td>
<td>6. Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by the words in a text.</td>
<td>b. Use illustrations and context to make predictions about text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing, or idea in the text an illustration depicts).</td>
<td>7. Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.</td>
<td>7. Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.</td>
<td>8. Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.</td>
<td>8. Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).</td>
<td>9. Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).</td>
<td>a. Activate prior knowledge related to the information and events in texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.</td>
<td>10. With prompting and support, read informational texts appropriately complex for grade 1.</td>
<td>b. Confirm predictions about what will happen next in a text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Activate prior knowledge related to the information and events in texts.</td>
<td>a. Activate prior knowledge related to the information and events in a text.</td>
<td>10. By the end of year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Use illustrations and context to make predictions about text.</td>
<td>b. Confirm predictions about what will happen next in a text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 03.10.12
The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year and help ensure that students gain adequate exposure to a range of texts and tasks. Rigor is also infused through the requirement that students read increasingly complex texts through the grades. Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year’s grade specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 3 Students:</th>
<th>Grade 4 Students:</th>
<th>Grade 5 Students:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Ideas and Details</strong></td>
<td><strong>Key Ideas and Details</strong></td>
<td><strong>Key Ideas and Details</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.</td>
<td>1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</td>
<td>1. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.</td>
<td>2. Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.</td>
<td>2. Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.</td>
<td>3. Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.</td>
<td>3. Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Craft and Structure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Craft and Structure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Craft and Structure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.</td>
<td>4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.</td>
<td>4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.</td>
<td>5. Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.</td>
<td>5. Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.</td>
<td>6. Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.</td>
<td>6. Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).</td>
<td>7. Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.</td>
<td>7. Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).</td>
<td>8. Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.</td>
<td>8. Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.</td>
<td>9. Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.</td>
<td>9. Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 2–3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
<td>10. By the end of year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
<td>10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# READING STANDARDS FOR INFORMATIONAL TEXT 6-12

The CCR anchor standards and high school grade-specific standards work in tandem to define college and career readiness expectations—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 6 Students:</th>
<th>Grade 7 Students:</th>
<th>Grade 8 Students:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Ideas and Details</strong></td>
<td><strong>Craft and Structure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</td>
<td>1. Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.</td>
<td>1. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.</td>
<td>2. Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.</td>
<td>4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings. (See grade 6 Language standards 4-6 on page 31 for additional expectations.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).</td>
<td>3. Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed in the text.</td>
<td>5. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text, analyzing how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Craft and Structure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings. (See grade 6 Language standards 4-6 on page 31 for additional expectations.)</td>
<td>7. Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.</td>
<td>10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.</td>
<td>8. Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.</td>
<td>10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Analyze the use of text features (e.g., graphics, headers, captions) in popular media.</td>
<td>9. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.</td>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.</td>
<td>10. Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).</td>
<td>10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
<td>7. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.</td>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.</td>
<td>8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.</td>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.</td>
<td>9. Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.</td>
<td>10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).</td>
<td>10. Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.</td>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
<td>10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Note:** The standards are designed to help students develop a broad range of reading skills and knowledge, preparing them for college and career readiness.
The CCR anchor standards and high school grade-specific standards work in tandem to define college and career readiness expectations—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Ideas and Details</th>
<th>Grades 9-10 Students:</th>
<th>Grades 11-12 Students:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</td>
<td>1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.</td>
<td>2. Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.</td>
<td>3. Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Craft and Structure | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| **4.** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper). (See grades 9-10 Language standards 4-6 on page 32 for additional expectations.) | 4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10). (See grades 11-12 Language standards 4-6 on page 32 for additional expectations.) |
| **5.** Analyze in detail how an author’s ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter). a. Analyze the use of text features (e.g., graphics, headers, captions) in functional workplace documents. | 5. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging. a. Analyze the use of text features (e.g., graphics, headers, captions) in public documents. |
| **6.** Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose. | 6. Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text. |

| Integration of Knowledge and Ideas | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| **7.** Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person’s life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account. | 7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem. |
| **8.** Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning. | 8. Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., The Federalist, presidential addresses). |
| **9.** Analyze seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (e.g., Washington’s Farewell Address, the Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms speech, King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail”), including how they address related themes and concepts. | 9. Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (including The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address) for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features. |

| Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| **10.** By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently. | 10. By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently. |
**READING STANDARDS FOR LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES 6-12**

The standards below begin at grade 6; standards for K–5 reading in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects are integrated into the K–5 Reading standards. The CCR anchor standards and high school standards in literacy work in tandem to define college and career readiness expectations—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades 6-8 Students:</th>
<th>Grades 9-10 Students:</th>
<th>Grades 11-12 Students:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Ideas and Details</strong></td>
<td><strong>Craft and Structure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.</td>
<td>1. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.</td>
<td>5. Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.</td>
<td>4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.</td>
<td>5. Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Identify key steps in a text’s description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).</td>
<td>5. Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.</td>
<td>6. Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.</td>
<td>4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).</td>
<td>5. Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).</td>
<td>6. Evaluate the historical event or issue by assessing the authors’ claims, reasoning, and evidence.</td>
<td>6. Evaluate authors’ differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors’ claims, reasoning, and evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.</td>
<td>7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.</td>
<td>7. Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.</td>
<td>8. Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author’s claims.</td>
<td>8. Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.</td>
<td>9. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.</td>
<td>9. Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
<td>10. By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
<td>10. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# READING STANDARDS FOR LITERACY IN SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS 6-12

The standards below begin at grade 6; standards for K–5 reading in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects are integrated into the K–5 Reading standards. The CCR anchor standards and high school standards in literacy work in tandem to define college and career readiness expectations—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades 6-8 Students:</th>
<th>Grades 9-10 Students:</th>
<th>Grades 11-12 Students:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Ideas and Details</strong></td>
<td><strong>Key Ideas and Details</strong></td>
<td><strong>Key Ideas and Details</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts.</td>
<td>1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts, attending to the precise details of explanations or descriptions.</td>
<td>1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts, attending to important distinctions the author makes and to any gaps or inconsistencies in the account.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; provide an accurate summary of the text distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.</td>
<td>2. Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; trace the text's explanation or depiction of a complex process, phenomenon, or concept; provide an accurate summary of the text.</td>
<td>2. Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; summarize complex concepts, processes, or information presented in a text by paraphrasing them in simpler but still accurate terms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.</td>
<td>3. Follow precisely a complex multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks, attending to special cases or exceptions defined in the text.</td>
<td>3. Follow precisely a complex multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks; analyze the specific results based on explanations in the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Craft and Structure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Craft and Structure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Craft and Structure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to grades 6–8 texts and topics.</td>
<td>4. Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to grades 9–10 texts and topics.</td>
<td>4. Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to grades 11–12 texts and topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to an understanding of the topic.</td>
<td>5. Analyze the structure of the relationships among concepts in a text, including relationships among key terms (e.g., force, friction, reaction force, energy).</td>
<td>5. Analyze how the text structures information or ideas into categories or hierarchies, demonstrating understanding of the information or ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Analyze the author's purpose in providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text.</td>
<td>6. Analyze the author's purpose in providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text, defining the question the author seeks to address.</td>
<td>6. Analyze the author's purpose in providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text, identifying important issues that remain unresolved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Integrate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text with a version of that information expressed visually (e.g., in a flowchart, diagram, model, graph, or table).</td>
<td>7. Translate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text into visual form (e.g., a table or chart) and translate information expressed visually or mathematically (e.g., in an equation) into words.</td>
<td>7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., quantitative data, video, multimedia) in order to address a question or solve a problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Distinguish among facts, reasoned judgment based on research findings, and speculation in a text.</td>
<td>8. Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claim or a recommendation for solving a scientific or technical problem.</td>
<td>8. Evaluate the hypotheses, data, analysis, and conclusions in a science or technical text, verifying the data when possible and corroborating or challenging conclusions with other sources of information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Compare and contrast the information gained from experiments, simulations, video, or multimedia sources with that gained from reading a text on the same topic.</td>
<td>9. Compare and contrast findings presented in a text to those from other sources (including their own experiments), noting when the findings support or contradict previous explanations or accounts.</td>
<td>9. Synthesize information from a range of sources (e.g., texts, experiments, simulations) into a coherent understanding of a process, phenomenon, or concept, resolving conflicting information when possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend science/technical texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
<td>10. By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend science/technical texts in the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
<td>10. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend science/technical texts in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CCSS for ELA/Literacy–READING STANDARD 9

CCR ANCHOR STANDARD FOR READING
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches authors take.

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE GRADE 6
9. Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and stories.

READING STANDARDS FOR INFORMATIONAL TEXT GRADE 6
9. Compare and contrast one author’s presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES GRADES 6–8
9. Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERACY IN SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS GRADES 6–8
9. Compare and contrast the information gained from experiments, simulations, videos, or multimedia sources with that gained from reading a text on the same topic.
CCSS ELA/LITERACY—READING STANDARD 1

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARD
Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

READING STANDARDS FOR INFORMATIONAL TEXT GRADES K–12
K With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
1. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
2. Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.
3. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for answers.
4. Refer to details and examples in a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
5. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
6. Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
7. Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
8. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
9–10. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
11–12. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES GRADES 6-12
6–8 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
9–10 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
11–12 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERACY IN SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS GRADES 6-12
6–8 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts.
9–10 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts, attending to the precise details of explanations or descriptions.
11–12 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts, attending to important distinctions the author makes and to gaps or inconsistencies in the account.
The Standards’ Grade-Specific Text Complexity Demands

As illustrated in figure 4, text complexity in the Standards is defined in grade bands: grades 2–3, 4–5, 6–8, 9–10, and 11–CCR. Students in the first year(s) of a given band are expected by the end of the year to read and comprehend proficiently within the band, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. Students in the last year of a band are expected by the end of the year to read and comprehend independently and proficiently within the band.

Figure 4: The Progression of Reading Standard 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade(s)</th>
<th>Reading Standard 10 (individual text types omitted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>With prompting and support, read prose and poetry [informational texts] of appropriate complexity for grade 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature [informational texts] in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature [informational texts] at the high end of the grades 2–3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature [informational texts] in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature [informational texts] at the high end of the grades 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature [informational texts, history/social studies texts, science/technical texts] in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature [informational texts, history/social studies texts, science/technical texts] in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature [informational texts, history/social studies texts, science/technical texts] at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9–10</td>
<td>By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature [informational texts, history/social studies texts, science/technical texts] in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature [informational texts, history/social studies texts, science/technical texts] at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–12</td>
<td>By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature [informational texts, history/social studies texts, science/technical texts] in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature [informational texts, history/social studies texts, science/technical texts] at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5As noted above in “Key Considerations in Implementing Text Complexity,” K–1 texts are not amenable to quantitative measure. Furthermore, students in those grades are acquiring the code at varied rates. Hence, the Standards’ text complexity requirements begin formally with grade 2.
Example 2: *The Grapes of Wrath* (Grades 9-10 Text Complexity Band)

Excerpt

The man took off his dark, stained hat and stood with a curious humility in front of the screen. “Could you see your way to sell us a loaf of bread, ma’am?”

Mae said, “This ain’t a grocery store. We got bread to make san’widges.”

“I know, ma’am.” His humility was insistent. “We need bread and there ain’t nothin’ for quite a piece, they say.”

“If we sell bread we gonna run out.” Mae’s tone was faltering.

“We’re hungry,” the man said.

“Whyn’t you buy a san’widge? We got nice san’widges, hamburgs.”

“We’d sure admire to do that, ma’am. But we can’t. We got to make a dime do all of us.” And he said embarrassedly, “We ain’t got but a little.”

Mae said, “You can’t get no loaf a bread for a dime. We only got fifteen-cent loafs.”

From behind her Al growled, “God Almighty, Mae, give ‘em bread.”

“We’ll run out ‘fore the bread truck comes.”

“Run out then, goddamn it,” said Al. He looked sullenly down at the potato salad he was mixing.

Mae shrugged her plump shoulders and looked to the truck drivers to show them what she was up against.

She held the screen door open and the man came in, bringing a smell of sweat with him. The boys edged behind him and they went immediately to the candy case and stared in—not with craving or with hope or even with desire, but just with a kind of wonder that such things could be. They were alike in size and their faces were alike. One scratched his dusty ankle with the toe nails of his other foot. The other whispered some soft message and then they straightened their arms so that their clenched fists in the overall pockets showed through the thin blue cloth.

Mae opened a drawer and took out a long waxpaper-wrapped loaf. “This here is a fifteen-cent loaf.”

The man put his hat back on his head. He answered with inflexible humility, “Won’t you—can’t you see your way to cut off ten cents’ worth?”

Al said snarlingly, “Goddamn it, Mae. Give ‘em the loaf.”

The man turned toward Al. “No, we want ta buy ten cents’ worth of it. We got it figgered awful close, mister, to get to California.”

Mae said resignedly, “You can have this for ten cents.”

“That’d be robbin’ you, ma’am.”

“Go ahead—Al says to take it.” She pushed the waxpapered loaf across the counter. The man took a deep leather pouch from his rear pocket, untied the strings, and spread it open. It was heavy with silver and with greasy bills.

“May soun’ funny to be so tight,” he apologized. “We got a thousan’ miles to go, an’ we don’ know if we’ll make it.” He dug in the pouch with a forefinger, located a dime, and pinched in for it. When he put it down on the counter he had a penny with it. He was about to drop the penny back into the pouch when his eye fell on the boys frozen before the candy counter. He moved slowly down to them. He pointed in the case at big long sticks of striped peppermint. “Is them penny candy, ma’am?”
Mae moved down and looked in. “Which ones?”

“There, them stripy ones.”

The little boys raised their eyes to her face and they stopped breathing; their mouths were partly opened, their half-naked bodies were rigid.

“Oh—them. Well, no—them’s two for a penny.”

“Well, gimme two then, ma’am.” He placed the copper cent carefully on the counter. The boys expelled their held breath softly. Mae held the big sticks out.


**Figure 6: Annotation of *The Grapes of Wrath***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualitative Measures</th>
<th>Quantitative Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Levels of Meaning</strong></td>
<td>The quantitative assessment of <em>The Grapes of Wrath</em> demonstrates the difficulty many currently existing readability measures have in capturing adequately the richness of sophisticated works of literature, as various ratings suggest a placement within the grades 2–3 text complexity band. A Coh-Metrix analysis also tends to suggest the text is an easy one since the syntax is uncomplicated and the author uses a conventional story structure and only a moderate number of abstract words. (The analysis does indicate, however, that a great deal of inferencing will be required to interpret and connect the text’s words, sentences, and central ideas.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The text is relatively simple, explicit, and conventional in form. Events are largely related in chronological order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language Conventionality and Clarity</strong></td>
<td>Although the language used is generally familiar, clear, and conversational, the dialect of the characters may pose a challenge for some readers. Steinbeck also puts a great deal of weight on certain less familiar words, such as <em>faltering.</em> In various portions of the novel not fully represented in the excerpt, the author combines rich, vivid, and detailed description with an economy of words that requires heavy inferencing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge Demands</strong></td>
<td>The themes are sophisticated. The experiences and perspective conveyed will be different from those of many students. Knowledge of the Great Depression, the “Okie Migration” to California, and the religion and music of the migrants is helpful, but the author himself provides much of the context needed for comprehension.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recommended Placement**

Though considered extremely easy by many quantitative measures, *The Grapes of Wrath* has a sophistication of theme and content that makes it more suitable for early high school (grades 9–10), which is where the Standards have placed it. In this case, qualitative measures have overruled the quantitative measures.
"Letter from a Birmingham Jail [King, Jr.]"

16 April 1963

My Dear Fellow Clergymen:
While confined here in the Birmingham city jail, I came across your recent statement calling my present activities "unwise and untimely." Seldom do I pause to answer criticism of my work and ideas. If I sought to answer all the criticisms that cross my desk, my secretaries would have little time for anything other than such correspondence in the course of the day, and I would have no time for constructive work. But since I feel that you are men of genuine good will and that your criticisms are sincerely set forth, I want to try to answer your statement in what I hope will be patient and reasonable terms.

I think I should indicate why I am here in Birmingham, since you have been influenced by the view which argues against "outsiders coming in." I have the honor of serving as president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization operating in every southern state, with headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. We have some eighty five affiliated organizations across the South, and one of them is the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights. Frequently we share staff, educational and financial resources with our affiliates. Several months ago the affiliate here in Birmingham asked us to be on call to engage in a nonviolent direct action program if such were deemed necessary. We readily consented, and when the hour came we lived up to our promise. So I, along with several members of my staff, am here because I was invited here. I am here because I have organizational ties here.

But more basically, I am in Birmingham because injustice is here. Just as the prophets of the eighth century B.C. left their villages and carried their "thus saith the Lord" far beyond the boundaries of their home towns, and just as the Apostle Paul left his village of Tarsus and carried the gospel of Jesus Christ to the far corners of the Greco Roman world, so am I compelled to carry the gospel of freedom beyond my own home town. Like Paul, I must constantly respond to the Macedonian call for aid.

Moreover, I am cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial "outside agitator" idea. Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider anywhere within its bounds.

You deplore the demonstrations taking place in Birmingham. But your statement, I am sorry
to say, fails to express a similar concern for the conditions that brought about the
demonstrations. I am sure that none of you would want to rest content with the superficial
kind of social analysis that deals merely with effects and does not grapple with underlying
causes. It is unfortunate that demonstrations are taking place in Birmingham, but it is even
more unfortunate that the city's white power structure left the Negro community with no
alternative.

In any nonviolent campaign there are four basic steps: collection of the facts to determine
whether injustices exist; negotiation; self purification; and direct action. We have gone
through all these steps in Birmingham. There can be no gainsaying the fact that racial
injustice engulfs this community. Birmingham is probably the most thoroughly segregated
city in the United States. Its ugly record of brutality is widely known. Negroes have
experienced grossly unjust treatment in the courts. There have been more unsolved
bombings of Negro homes and churches in Birmingham than in any other city in the nation.
These are the hard, brutal facts of the case. On the basis of these conditions, Negro leaders
sought to negotiate with the city fathers. But the latter consistently refused to engage in good
faith negotiation.

Then, last September, came the opportunity to talk with leaders of Birmingham's economic
community. In the course of the negotiations, certain promises were made by the merchants-
-for example, to remove the stores' humiliating racial signs. On the basis of these promises,
the Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth and the leaders of the Alabama Christian Movement for
Human Rights agreed to a moratorium on all demonstrations. As the weeks and months went
by, we realized that we were the victims of a broken promise. A few signs, briefly removed,
returned; the others remained. As in so many past experiences, our hopes had been blasted,
and the shadow of deep disappointment settled upon us. We had no alternative except to
prepare for direct action, whereby we would present our very bodies as a means of laying
our case before the conscience of the local and the national community. Mindful of the
difficulties involved, we decided to undertake a process of self purification. We began a
series of workshops on nonviolence, and we repeatedly asked ourselves: "Are you able to
accept blows without retaliating?" "Are you able to endure the ordeal of jail?" We decided to
schedule our direct action program for the Easter season, realizing that except for Christmas,
this is the main shopping period of the year. Knowing that a strong economic-withdrawal
program would be the by product of direct action, we felt that this would be the best time to
bring pressure to bear on the merchants for the needed change.

Then it occurred to us that Birmingham's mayoral election was coming up in March, and we
speedily decided to postpone action until after election day. When we discovered that the
Commissioner of Public Safety, Eugene "Bull" Connor, had piled up enough votes to be in
the run off, we decided again to postpone action until the day after the run off so that the
demonstrations could not be used to cloud the issues. Like many others, we waited to see
Mr. Connor defeated, and to this end we endured postponement after postponement. Having
aided in this community need, we felt that our direct action program could be delayed no
longer.
You may well ask: "Why direct action? Why sit ins, marches and so forth? Isn't negotiation a better path?" You are quite right in calling for negotiation. Indeed, this is the very purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored. My citing the creation of tension as part of the work of the nonviolent resister may sound rather shocking. But I must confess that I am not afraid of the word "tension." I have earnestly opposed violent tension, but there is a type of constructive, nonviolent tension which is necessary for growth. Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal, so must we see the need for nonviolent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood. The purpose of our direct action program is to create a situation so crisis packed that it will inevitably open the door to negotiation. I therefore concur with you in your call for negotiation. Too long has our beloved Southland been bogged down in a tragic effort to live in monologue rather than dialogue.

One of the basic points in your statement is that the action that I and my associates have taken in Birmingham is untimely. Some have asked: "Why didn't you give the new city administration time to act?" The only answer that I can give to this query is that the new Birmingham administration must be prodded about as much as the outgoing one, before it will act. We are sadly mistaken if we feel that the election of Albert Boutwell as mayor will bring the millennium to Birmingham. While Mr. Boutwell is a much more gentle person than Mr. Connor, they are both segregationists, dedicated to maintenance of the status quo. I have hope that Mr. Boutwell will be reasonable enough to see the futility of massive resistance to desegregation. But he will not see this without pressure from devotees of civil rights. My friends, I must say to you that we have not made a single gain in civil rights without determined legal and nonviolent pressure. Lamentably, it is an historical fact that privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily. Individuals may see the moral light and voluntarily give up their unjust posture; but, as Reinhold Niebuhr has reminded us, groups tend to be more immoral than individuals.

We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have yet to engage in a direct action campaign that was "well timed" in the view of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word "Wait!" It rings in the ear of every Negro with piercing familiarity. This "Wait" has almost always meant "Never." We must come to see, with one of our distinguished jurists, that "justice too long delayed is justice denied."

We have waited for more than 340 years for our constitutional and God given rights. The nations of Asia and Africa are moving with jetlike speed toward gaining political independence, but we still creep at horse and buggy pace toward gaining a cup of coffee at a lunch counter. Perhaps it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say, "Wait." But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and
fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate filled policemen curse, kick and even kill your black brothers and sisters; when you see the vast majority of your twenty million Negro brothers smothering in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society; when you suddenly find your tongue twisted and your speech stammering as you seek to explain to your six year old daughter why she can't go to the public amusement park that has just been advertised on television, and see tears welling up in her eyes when she is told that Funtown is closed to colored children, and see ominous clouds of inferiority beginning to form in her little mental sky, and see her beginning to distort her personality by developing an unconscious bitterness toward white people; when you have to concoct an answer for a five year old son who is asking: "Daddy, why do white people treat colored people so mean?"; when you take a cross county drive and find it necessary to sleep night after night in the uncomfortable corners of your automobile because no motel will accept you; when you are humiliated day in and day out by nagging signs reading "white" and "colored"; when your first name becomes "nigger," your middle name becomes "boy" (however old you are) and your last name becomes "John," and your wife and mother are never given the respected title "Mrs."; when you are harried by day and haunted by night by the fact that you are a Negro, living constantly at tiptoe stance, never quite knowing what to expect next, and are plagued with inner fears and outer resentments; when you are forever fighting a degenerating sense of "nobodiness"--then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait. There comes a time when the cup of endurance runs over, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into the abyss of despair. I hope, sirs, you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience. You express a great deal of anxiety over our willingness to break laws. This is certainly a legitimate concern. Since we so diligently urge people to obey the Supreme Court's decision of 1954 outlawing segregation in the public schools, at first glance it may seem rather paradoxical for us consciously to break laws. One may well ask: "How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?" The answer lies in the fact that there are two types of laws: just and unjust. I would be the first to advocate obeying just laws. One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that "an unjust law is no law at all."

Now, what is the difference between the two? How does one determine whether a law is just or unjust? A just law is a man made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. To put it in the terms of St. Thomas Aquinas: An unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal law and natural law. Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust. All segregation statutes are unjust because segregation distorts the soul and damages the personality. It gives the segregator a false sense of superiority and the segregated a false sense of inferiority. Segregation, to use the terminology of the Jewish philosopher Martin Buber, substitutes an "I it" relationship for an "I thou" relationship and ends up relegating persons to the status of things. Hence segregation is not only politically, economically and sociologically unsound, it is morally wrong and sinful. Paul Tillich has said that sin is separation. Is not segregation an existential expression of man's tragic separation, his awful estrangement, his terrible sinfulness? Thus it is that I can urge men to obey the 1954 decision of the Supreme Court, for it is morally right; and I can urge them to
disobey segregation ordinances, for they are morally wrong.

Let us consider a more concrete example of just and unjust laws. An unjust law is a code that a numerical or power majority group compels a minority group to obey but does not make binding on itself. This is difference made legal. By the same token, a just law is a code that a majority compels a minority to follow and that it is willing to follow itself. This is sameness made legal. Let me give another explanation. A law is unjust if it is inflicted on a minority that, as a result of being denied the right to vote, had no part in enacting or devising the law. Who can say that the legislature of Alabama which set up that state's segregation laws was democratically elected? Throughout Alabama all sorts of devious methods are used to prevent Negroes from becoming registered voters, and there are some counties in which, even though Negroes constitute a majority of the population, not a single Negro is registered. Can any law enacted under such circumstances be considered democratically structured?

Sometimes a law is just on its face and unjust in its application. For instance, I have been arrested on a charge of parading without a permit. Now, there is nothing wrong in having an ordinance which requires a permit for a parade. But such an ordinance becomes unjust when it is used to maintain segregation and to deny citizens the First-Amendment privilege of peaceful assembly and protest.

I hope you are able to see the distinction I am trying to point out. In no sense do I advocate evading or defying the law, as would the rabid segregationist. That would lead to anarchy. One who breaks an unjust law must do so openly, lovingly, and with a willingness to accept the penalty. I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and who willingly accepts the penalty of imprisonment in order to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the highest respect for law.

Of course, there is nothing new about this kind of civil disobedience. It was evidenced sublimely in the refusal of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to obey the laws of Nebuchadnezzar, on the ground that a higher moral law was at stake. It was practiced superbly by the early Christians, who were willing to face hungry lions and the excruciating pain of chopping blocks rather than submit to certain unjust laws of the Roman Empire. To a degree, academic freedom is a reality today because Socrates practiced civil disobedience. In our own nation, the Boston Tea Party represented a massive act of civil disobedience.

We should never forget that everything Adolf Hitler did in Germany was "legal" and everything the Hungarian freedom fighters did in Hungary was "illegal." It was "illegal" to aid and comfort a Jew in Hitler's Germany. Even so, I am sure that, had I lived in Germany at the time, I would have aided and comforted my Jewish brothers. If today I lived in a Communist country where certain principles dear to the Christian faith are suppressed, I would openly advocate disobeying that country's antireligious laws.

I must make two honest confessions to you, my Christian and Jewish brothers. First, I must confess that over the past few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling
block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Councillor or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action"; who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season." Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection.

I had hoped that the white moderate would understand that law and order exist for the purpose of establishing justice and that when they fail in this purpose they become the dangerously structured dams that block the flow of social progress. I had hoped that the white moderate would understand that the present tension in the South is a necessary phase of the transition from an obnoxious negative peace, in which the Negro passively accepted his unjust plight, to a substantive and positive peace, in which all men will respect the dignity and worth of human personality. Actually, we who engage in nonviolent direct action are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive. We bring it out in the open, where it can be seen and dealt with. Like a boil that can never be cured so long as it is covered up but must be opened with all its ugliness to the natural medicines of air and light, injustice must be exposed, with all the tension its exposure creates, to the light of human conscience and the air of national opinion before it can be cured.

In your statement you assert that our actions, even though peaceful, must be condemned because they precipitate violence. But is this a logical assertion? Isn't this like condemning a robbed man because his possession of money precipitated the evil act of robbery? Isn't this like condemning Socrates because his unswerving commitment to truth and his philosophical inquiries precipitated the act by the misguided populace in which they made him drink hemlock? Isn't this like condemning Jesus because his unique God consciousness and never ceasing devotion to God's will precipitated the evil act of crucifixion? We must come to see that, as the federal courts have consistently affirmed, it is wrong to urge an individual to cease his efforts to gain his basic constitutional rights because the quest may precipitate violence. Society must protect the robbed and punish the robber. I had also hoped that the white moderate would reject the myth concerning time in relation to the struggle for freedom. I have just received a letter from a white brother in Texas. He writes: "All Christians know that the colored people will receive equal rights eventually, but it is possible that you are in too great a religious hurry. It has taken Christianity almost two thousand years to accomplish what it has. The teachings of Christ take time to come to earth." Such an attitude stems from a tragic misconception of time, from the strangely irrational notion that there is something in the very flow of time that will inevitably cure all ills. Actually, time itself is neutral; it can be used either destructively or constructively. More and more I feel that the people of ill will have used time much more effectively than have the people of good will. We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people. Human progress never
rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be
co-workers with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of
social stagnation. We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe
to do right. Now is the time to make real the promise of democracy and transform our
pending national elegy into a creative psalm of brotherhood. Now is the time to lift our
national policy from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of human dignity.

You speak of our activity in Birmingham as extreme. At first I was rather disappointed that
fellow clergymen would see my nonviolent efforts as those of an extremist. I began thinking
about the fact that I stand in the middle of two opposing forces in the Negro community. One
is a force of complacency, made up in part of Negroes who, as a result of long years of
oppression, are so drained of self respect and a sense of "somebodiness" that they have
adjusted to segregation; and in part of a few middle-class Negroes who, because of a degree
of academic and economic security and because in some ways they profit by segregation,
have become insensitive to the problems of the masses. The other force is one of bitterness
and hatred, and it comes perilously close to advocating violence. It is expressed in the
various black nationalist groups that are springing up across the nation, the largest and best
known being Elijah Muhammad's Muslim movement. Nourished by the Negro's frustration
over the continued existence of racial discrimination, this movement is made up of people
who have lost faith in America, who have absolutely repudiated Christianity, and who have
concluded that the white man is an incorrigible "devila."

I have tried to stand between these two forces, saying that we need emulate neither the "do
nothingism" of the complacent nor the hatred and despair of the black nationalist. For there
is the more excellent way of love and nonviolent protest. I am grateful to God that, through
the influence of the Negro church, the way of nonviolence became an integral part of our
struggle. If this philosophy had not emerged, by now many streets of the South would, I am
convinced, be flowing with blood. And I am further convinced that if our white brothers
dismiss as "rabble rousers" and "outside agitators" those of us who employ nonviolent direct
action, and if they refuse to support our nonviolent efforts, millions of Negroes will, out of
frustration and despair, seek solace and security in black nationalist ideologies—a
development that would inevitably lead to a frightening racial nightmare.

Oppressed people cannot remain oppressed forever. The yearning for freedom eventually
manifests itself, and that is what has happened to the American Negro. Something within has
reminded him of his birthright of freedom, and something without has reminded him that it
can be gained. Consciously or unconsciously, he has been caught up by the Zeitgeist, and
with his black brothers of Africa and his brown and yellow brothers of Asia, South America
and the Caribbean, the United States Negro is moving with a sense of great urgency toward
the promised land of racial justice. If one recognizes this vital urge that has engulfed the
Negro community, one should readily understand why public demonstrations are taking
place. The Negro has manypent up resentments and latent frustrations, and he must release
them. So let him march; let him make prayer pilgrimages to the city hall; let him go on
freedom rides -and try to understand why he must do so. If his repressed emotions are not
released in nonviolent ways, they will seek expression through violence; this is not a threat
but a fact of history. So I have not said to my people: "Get rid of your discontent." Rather, I have tried to say that this normal and healthy discontent can be channeled into the creative outlet of nonviolent direct action. And now this approach is being termed extremist. But though I was initially disappointed at being categorized as an extremist, as I continued to think about the matter I gradually gained a measure of satisfaction from the label. Was not Jesus an extremist for love: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Was not Amos an extremist for justice: "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever flowing stream." Was not Paul an extremist for the Christian gospel: "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Was not Martin Luther an extremist: "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise, so help me God." And John Bunyan: "I will stay in jail to the end of my days before I make a butchery of my conscience." And Abraham Lincoln: "This nation cannot survive half slave and half free." And Thomas Jefferson: "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal . . ." So the question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be. Will we be extremists for hate or for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice or for the extension of justice? In that dramatic scene on Calvary's hill three men were crucified. We must never forget that all three were crucified for the same crime--the crime of extremism. Two were extremists for immorality, and thus fell below their environment. The other, Jesus Christ, was an extremist for love, truth and goodness, and thereby rose above his environment. Perhaps the South, the nation and the world are in dire need of creative extremists.

I had hoped that the white moderate would see this need. Perhaps I was too optimistic; perhaps I expected too much. I suppose I should have realized that few members of the oppressor race can understand the deep groans and passionate yearnings of the oppressed race, and still fewer have the vision to see that injustice must be rooted out by strong, persistent and determined action. I am thankful, however, that some of our white brothers in the South have grasped the meaning of this social revolution and committed themselves to it. They are still all too few in quantity, but they are big in quality. Some -such as Ralph McGill, Lillian Smith, Harry Golden, James McBride Dabbs, Ann Braden and Sarah Patton Boyle--have written about our struggle in eloquent and prophetic terms. Others have marched with us down nameless streets of the South. They have languished in filthy, roach infested jails, suffering the abuse and brutality of policemen who view them as "dirty nigger-lovers." Unlike so many of their moderate brothers and sisters, they have recognized the urgency of the moment and sensed the need for powerful "action" antidotes to combat the disease of segregation. Let me take note of my other major disappointment. I have been so greatly disappointed with the white church and its leadership. Of course, there are some notable exceptions. I am not unmindful of the fact that each of you has taken some significant stands on this issue. I commend you, Reverend Stallings, for your Christian stand on this past Sunday, in welcoming Negroes to your worship service on a nonsegregated basis. I commend the Catholic leaders of this state for integrating Spring Hill College several years ago.

But despite these notable exceptions, I must honestly reiterate that I have been disappointed with the church. I do not say this as one of those negative critics who can always find
something wrong with the church. I say this as a minister of the gospel, who loves the church; who was nurtured in its bosom; who has been sustained by its spiritual blessings and who will remain true to it as long as the cord of life shall lengthen.

When I was suddenly catapulted into the leadership of the bus protest in Montgomery, Alabama, a few years ago, I felt we would be supported by the white church. I felt that the white ministers, priests and rabbis of the South would be among our strongest allies. Instead, some have been outright opponents, refusing to understand the freedom movement and misrepresenting its leaders; all too many others have been more cautious than courageous and have remained silent behind the anesthetizing security of stained glass windows.

In spite of my shattered dreams, I came to Birmingham with the hope that the white religious leadership of this community would see the justice of our cause and, with deep moral concern, would serve as the channel through which our just grievances could reach the power structure. I had hoped that each of you would understand. But again I have been disappointed.

I have heard numerous southern religious leaders admonish their worshipers to comply with a desegregation decision because it is the law, but I have longed to hear white ministers declare: "Follow this decree because integration is morally right and because the Negro is your brother." In the midst of blatant injustices inflicted upon the Negro, I have watched white churchmen stand on the sideline and mouth pious irrelevancies and sanctimonious trivialities. In the midst of a mighty struggle to rid our nation of racial and economic injustice, I have heard many ministers say: "Those are social issues, with which the gospel has no real concern." And I have watched many churches commit themselves to a completely other worldly religion which makes a strange, un-Biblical distinction between body and soul, between the sacred and the secular.

I have traveled the length and breadth of Alabama, Mississippi and all the other southern states. On sweltering summer days and crisp autumn mornings I have looked at the South's beautiful churches with their lofty spires pointing heavenward. I have beheld the impressive outlines of her massive religious education buildings. Over and over I have found myself asking: "What kind of people worship here? Who is their God? Where were their voices when the lips of Governor Barnett dripped with words of interposition and nullification? Where were they when Governor Wallace gave a clarion call for defiance and hatred? Where were their voices of support when bruised and weary Negro men and women decided to rise from the dark dungeons of complacency to the bright hills of creative protest?"

Yes, these questions are still in my mind. In deep disappointment I have wept over the laxity of the church. But be assured that my tears have been tears of love. There can be no deep disappointment where there is not deep love. Yes, I love the church. How could I do otherwise? I am in the rather unique position of being the son, the grandson and the great grandson of preachers. Yes, I see the church as the body of Christ. But, oh! How we have blemished and scarred that body through social neglect and through fear of being
There was a time when the church was very powerful--in the time when the early Christians rejoiced at being deemed worthy to suffer for what they believed. In those days the church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society. Whenever the early Christians entered a town, the people in power became disturbed and immediately sought to convict the Christians for being "disturbers of the peace" and "outside agitators." But the Christians pressed on, in the conviction that they were "a colony of heaven," called to obey God rather than man. Small in number, they were big in commitment. They were too God-intoxicated to be "astronomically intimidated." By their effort and example they brought an end to such ancient evils as infanticide and gladiatorial contests. Things are different now. So often the contemporary church is a weak, ineffectual voice with an uncertain sound. So often it is an archdefender of the status quo. Far from being disturbed by the presence of the church, the power structure of the average community is consoled by the church's silent--and often even vocal--sanction of things as they are.

But the judgment of God is upon the church as never before. If today's church does not recapture the sacrificial spirit of the early church, it will lose its authenticity, forfeit the loyalty of millions, and be dismissed as an irrelevant social club with no meaning for the twentieth century. Every day I meet young people whose disappointment with the church has turned into outright disgust.

Perhaps I have once again been too optimistic. Is organized religion too inextricably bound to the status quo to save our nation and the world? Perhaps I must turn my faith to the inner spiritual church, the church within the church, as the true ekklesia and the hope of the world. But again I am thankful to God that some noble souls from the ranks of organized religion have broken loose from the paralyzing chains of conformity and joined us as active partners in the struggle for freedom. They have left their secure congregations and walked the streets of Albany, Georgia, with us. They have gone down the highways of the South on tortuous rides for freedom. Yes, they have gone to jail with us. Some have been dismissed from their churches, have lost the support of their bishops and fellow ministers. But they have acted in the faith that right defeated is stronger than evil triumphant. Their witness has been the spiritual salt that has preserved the true meaning of the gospel in these troubled times. They have carved a tunnel of hope through the dark mountain of disappointment. I hope the church as a whole will meet the challenge of this decisive hour. But even if the church does not come to the aid of justice, I have no despair about the future. I have no fear about the outcome of our struggle in Birmingham, even if our motives are at present misunderstood. We will reach the goal of freedom in Birmingham and all over the nation, because the goal of America is freedom. Abused and scorned though we may be, our destiny is tied up with America's destiny. Before the pilgrims landed at Plymouth, we were here. Before the pen of Jefferson etched the majestic words of the Declaration of Independence across the pages of history, we were here. For more than two centuries our forebears labored in this country without wages; they made cotton king; they built the homes of their masters while suffering gross injustice and shameful humiliation -and yet out of a bottomless vitality they continued
to thrive and develop. If the inexpressible cruelties of slavery could not stop us, the opposition we now face will surely fail. We will win our freedom because the sacred heritage of our nation and the eternal will of God are embodied in our echoing demands. Before closing I feel impelled to mention one other point in your statement that has troubled me profoundly. You warmly commended the Birmingham police force for keeping "order" and "preventing violence." I doubt that you would have so warmly commended the police force if you had seen its dogs sinking their teeth into unarmed, nonviolent Negroes. I doubt that you would so quickly commend the policemen if you were to observe their ugly and inhumane treatment of Negroes here in the city jail; if you were to watch them push and curse old Negro women and young Negro girls; if you were to see them slap and kick old Negro men and young boys; if you were to observe them, as they did on two occasions, refuse to give us food because we wanted to sing our grace together. I cannot join you in your praise of the Birmingham police department.

It is true that the police have exercised a degree of discipline in handling the demonstrators. In this sense they have conducted themselves rather "nonviolently" in public. But for what purpose? To preserve the evil system of segregation. Over the past few years I have consistently preached that nonviolence demands that the means we use must be as pure as the ends we seek. I have tried to make clear that it is wrong to use immoral means to attain moral ends. But now I must affirm that it is just as wrong, or perhaps even more so, to use moral means to preserve immoral ends. Perhaps Mr. Connor and his policemen have been rather nonviolent in public, as was Chief Pritchett in Albany, Georgia, but they have used the moral means of nonviolence to maintain the immoral end of racial injustice. As T. S. Eliot has said: "The last temptation is the greatest treason: To do the right deed for the wrong reason."

I wish you had commended the Negro sit inners and demonstrators of Birmingham for their sublime courage, their willingness to suffer and their amazing discipline in the midst of great provocation. One day the South will recognize its real heroes. They will be the James Merediths, with the noble sense of purpose that enables them to face jeering and hostile mobs, and with the agonizing loneliness that characterizes the life of the pioneer. They will be old, oppressed, battered Negro women, symbolized in a seventy two year old woman in Montgomery, Alabama, who rose up with a sense of dignity and with her people decided not to ride segregated buses, and who responded with ungrammatical profundity to one who inquired about her weariness: "My feets is tired, but my soul is at rest." They will be the young high school and college students, the young ministers of the gospel and a host of their elders, courageously and nonviolently sitting in at lunch counters and willingly going to jail for conscience' sake. One day the South will know that when these disinherit children of God sat down at lunch counters, they were in reality standing up for what is best in the American dream and for the most sacred values in our Judaeo Christian heritage, thereby bringing our nation back to those great wells of democracy which were dug deep by the founding fathers in their formulation of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence.

Never before have I written so long a letter. I'm afraid it is much too long to take your
precious time. I can assure you that it would have been much shorter if I had been writing from a comfortable desk, but what else can one do when he is alone in a narrow jail cell, other than write long letters, think long thoughts and pray long prayers?

If I have said anything in this letter that overstates the truth and indicates an unreasonable impatience, I beg you to forgive me. If I have said anything that understates the truth and indicates my having a patience that allows me to settle for anything less than brotherhood, I beg God to forgive me.

I hope this letter finds you strong in the faith. I also hope that circumstances will soon make it possible for me to meet each of you, not as an integrationist or a civil-rights leader but as a fellow clergyman and a Christian brother. Let us all hope that the dark clouds of racial prejudice will soon pass away and the deep fog of misunderstanding will be lifted from our fear drenched communities, and in some not too distant tomorrow the radiant stars of love and brotherhood will shine over our great nation with all their scintillating beauty.

Yours for the cause of Peace and Brotherhood, Martin Luther King, Jr.
Published in:
King, Martin Luther Jr.

Page Editor: Ali B. Ali-Dinar, Ph.D.
Examples of *planned scaffolding* that teachers prepare in advance during their lesson and curriculum planning in order to support access to academic content and linguistic development include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Taking into account what students already know, including primary language and culture, and relating it to what they are to learn;
- Selecting and sequencing tasks, such as modeling and explaining, and providing guided practice, in a logical order;
- Frequently checking for understanding during instruction, as well as gauging progress at appropriate intervals throughout the year;
- Choosing texts carefully for specific purposes (e.g., motivational, linguistic, content);
- Providing a variety of collaborative grouping processes;
- Constructing good questions that promote critical thinking and extended discourse;
- Using a range of information systems, such as graphic organizers, diagrams, photographs, videos, or other multimedia to enhance access to content; and
- Providing students with language models, such as sentence frames/starters, academic vocabulary walls, language frame charts, exemplary writing samples, or teacher language modeling (e.g., using academic vocabulary or phrasing).

This planned scaffolding in turn allows teachers to provide *just-in-time* scaffolding during instruction, which flexibly attends to students’ needs as they interact with content and language. Examples of this type of scaffolding include:

- Prompting a student to elaborate on a response to extend his or her language use and thinking;
- Paraphrasing a student’s response and including target academic language as a model while, at the same time, accepting the student’s response using every day or “flawed” language;
- Adjusting instruction on the spot based on frequent checking for understanding; and
- Linking what a student is saying to prior knowledge or to learning to come (previewing).
What Does Text Complexity Mean for English Learners and Language Minority Students?

Lily Wong Fillmore, University of California, Berkeley
Charles J. Fillmore, University of California, Berkeley

Text Complexity and Academic Language
We begin with questions that educators throughout the U.S. should be asking. What will the more demanding complex texts implied by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) mean for those students who are already having trouble with existing standards? This group includes English learners (ELs), and also the language minority students (LMs) who speak English only, but not the variety that is valued and promoted in the society’s schools. What will the CCSS mean for the educators who work with these students? The students are unaware of what the changes in standards will mean for them, but teachers are not, and they are worried. How can they be expected to help their students handle materials that are more demanding than what already seems difficult enough?

This worry is justified. A glance at current efforts to map the CCSS onto curriculum, or at the design of sample units, suggests that there is little understanding in our community of the role played by language in the process of attaining literacy. Where any attention is given to language at all, the focus is on vocabulary, and that at the level of individual words.

We will argue that the problems English learners and language minority students are experiencing stem at least partly from educators’ failure to recognize the role played by language itself in literacy. Given the language diversity in our schools and in our classrooms, any effort to make the CCSS attainable for these and many other students must go beyond vocabulary, and should begin with an examination of our beliefs about language, literacy and learning.

In ways that appear to be little understood, even by literacy experts, the language used in complex texts of the type students should be reading in school is different in numerous ways from the language of ordinary talk. Differences in vocabulary, the easiest to see, make up only a part of it. Linguists and language analysts who have studied the language of academic texts have identified grammatical structures and devices for framing ideas, indicating relationships, and structuring arguments, that create substantial differences between spoken and written language.

The language used in complex texts differs enough from the English familiar to most students that it constitutes a barrier to understanding when they first encounter it in the texts they read in school. This becomes critical in the fourth grade and beyond when the texts children read take
on a different pedagogical function. Texts through the third grade are meant to teach children how to read, so they are composed using simple sentence patterns, decodable words and selected high-frequency words that are meant to be learned by sight, and they are accompanied by pictures that support an understanding of what the texts are about. Since the texts have minimal responsibility in bearing the meaning, they tend to lack the richness, depth and complexity found later.

From the fourth grade on, however, the texts themselves have a new purpose: children are supposed to have completed the process of “learning to read,” and are ready to begin “reading to learn,” as the saying goes. Reading becomes a means for learning subject matter, and texts at that point become pedagogical tools: they convey information to be read, studied and learned in such school subjects as literature, science, social studies and math. Given these new functions, texts cannot remain simple for long. To communicate complex ideas and information calls for the lexical and grammatical resources of mature discourse – students must master these if they are to succeed in school and career.

How do children learn such language? Ordinarily, language learning happens when learners come into close and frequent contact with speakers of the target language, and efforts are made both by the learners and target language speakers to communicate by use of that language. But interactional opportunities with speakers are seldom if ever available for the learning of academic language. It is highly unlikely that students, even “mainstream” English speakers, will find conversation partners who are inclined to interact with them in such language. In fact, very little of the language spoken by teachers in the classroom, even during explicit instruction, qualifies as instances of this register, as one discovers by studying transcripts of instructional events in classrooms.iii To further complicate matters, we would argue that academic language cannot be “taught” as a separate school subject, either, at least not in the way one might teach a language like English, Spanish or French. So where and how are students to learn this kind of language?

There is only one way to acquire the language of literacy, and that is through literacy itself. Why? Because the only place students are likely to encounter these structures and patterns is in the materials they read. And that is possible only if the texts they read in school are written in such language. Complex texts provide school-age learners reliable access to this language, and interacting with such texts allows them to discover how academic language works.

Herein lies a major problem for English learners and language minority students. One of the biggest roadblocks to learning is that they never get a chance to work with complex texts. Why would that be a problem? Simply put, the easy texts schools give to ELs and LMs – given prophylactically as a safeguard against failure – actually prevent them from discovering how language works in academic discourse. Simplified texts offer no clue as to what academic language sounds like or how it works. We will comment on the kind of help ELs and LMs need in order to work with complex texts, after we take a look at some samples of the language of academic discourse to see what it involves.
Powerfully Complex Texts: An Exemplar

So what are the linguistic characteristics of academic texts? An answer can be found by looking at the texts listed in the CCSS documents as exemplars of what students should be reading in grades 4-5 and above. (Exemplars can be found in grades K-3 texts, but mostly in those listed as read-alouds.) As we would expect from the CCSS’s “staircase of complexity,” examples of ‘complex’ texts can most readily be found in materials listed for grades 6-8 and above. Consider, for example, Martin Luther King’s Letter from Birmingham Jail (hereafter, Letter) included as a reading for Grades 9-10. It is demanding and complex, both linguistically and in its historical and philosophical content.

The Letter does not have abstruse vocabulary or complicated grammar when compared to more specialized discourse or to stylistic tendencies of an earlier era. Yet its linguistic demands are substantial. The study of any part of this text would result in a fairly comprehensive inventory of the basic communicative and grammatical characteristics of academic discourse. In what follows, we’ll use small pieces of this text to explicate what ELs and LMs and their teachers face more generally.

A quick look at the Letter’s first two paragraphs reveals some key features of such writing. In these paragraphs, King responds to the charge in the white clergymen’s published statement that the black community’s demonstrations were “unwise and untimely,” and were “led and directed by outsiders.”

WHILE confined here in the Birmingham city jail, I came across your recent statement calling our present activities “unwise and untimely.” Seldom, if ever, do I pause to answer criticism of my work and ideas. If I sought to answer all of the criticisms that cross my desk, my secretaries would be engaged in little else in the course of the day, and I would have no time for constructive work. But since I feel that you are men of genuine good will and your criticism are sincerely set forth, I would like to answer your statement in what I hope will be patient and reasonable terms.

I think I should give the reason for my being in Birmingham, since you have been influenced by the argument of “outsiders coming in.” I have the honor of serving as president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization operating in every Southern state, with headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. We have some eighty-five affiliate organizations all across the South, one being the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights. Whenever necessary and possible, we share staff, educational and financial resources with our affiliates. Several months ago our local affiliate here in Birmingham invited us to be on call to engage in a nonviolent direct-action program if such were deemed necessary. We readily consented, and when the hour came we lived up to our promises. So I am here, along with several members of my staff, because we were invited here. I am here because I have basic organizational ties here.

Beyond this, I am in Birmingham because injustice is here…

¹ Full text of this letter can be found at <http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/resources/article/annotated_letter_from_birmingham/#birmingham>
These paragraphs illustrate a hallmark of academic writing: **informational density**. Virtually every phrase and clause tells a story, or provides a crucial piece of information regarding the circumstances leading to King’s being in Birmingham. The informational load is in fact even greater than the sum of the individual parts because there are phrases that carry layered messages. The first paragraph begins with an adverbial clause which ostensibly reveals nothing more than where King was when he “came across” the clergymen’s statement – "While confined here in the Birmingham city jail…". The subtext is a rebuke – He could not have just come across the statement while flipping through the newspaper; he was locked up, his freedom curtailed. But it was also a rebuttal to the suggestion that “honest and open negotiation” was even possible in a situation where a man could be jailed for exercising his constitutional right to free speech.

The second sentence, beginning with a fronted two-part negative time adverbial requiring an auxiliary verb before the subject (“seldom, if ever, do I pause to answer criticism of my work”), implies that writing such a letter would ordinarily be seen as an interruption of work that should not be interrupted; under the circumstances, he has time to respond. The third sentence is a counterfactual conditional sentence explaining why this is usually impossible: “If I sought to answer all the criticisms” [which I do not], important work would not get done. The fourth sentence begins with a long subordinate clause that assumes (or pretends to assume) good will and sincerity on the part of the critics, and continues with an expression that includes what is functionally a kind of parenthetical (“I would like to answer your statement in what I hope will be patient and reasonable terms”).

The second paragraph takes on the charge that MLK is an intruding outsider, someone who doesn’t belong in their community. He explains that he has legitimate reasons for being in Birmingham, and that his organization has affiliates throughout the southern states, and he ends this paragraph, and begins the next one, with several repetitions of “here” and “because”: I am here because we were invited here, I am here because I have organizational ties here, I am in Birmingham because injustice is here.

A closer look at some of the phrases and clauses in these paragraphs reveals a frequently exploited grammatical device for packing information into texts: **heavy noun phrases**, phrases headed by nouns (NPs), which are modified or expanded by phrases and clauses before (pre-nominally) and after (post-nominally) the head noun itself. The grammar of English allows multiple pre- and post-modifiers to be packed into NPs, all of which adds information to the meaning of the head noun itself. Here in bracketed notation are two such heavy NPs, with the head nouns underlined (preposition phrases are labeled, PP; relative clause constructions by RC):

\[
\text{NP[your recent statement RC[calling our present activities “unwise and untimely”]]}.
\]

\[
\text{NP[some eighty-five affiliate organizations PP[all over the South], RC[one being the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights.]]}
\]
Elaboration of nouns is extremely frequent in informational and expository prose (60% of nouns are so elaborated), but is relatively rare in spoken language (15%, by one account). Pre-nominal modifiers (quantifiers and adjective phrases) are used slightly more often than post-nominal modifiers (prepositional phrases and relative clause constructions). This kind of text includes instances of NPs where both pre- and post-nominal modifiers appear as in the two examples above. These are very rare in spoken language.

The next sentence, “It is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say ’Wait’ “, introduces a metaphor – “the stinging darts of segregation.” It is followed by a 310-word sentence that begins with the word, But. What follows is a cascade of when-clauses, piling up reasons for understanding why King – and any sensible person – would find it difficult to wait. The signers of the newspaper statement, all white, are being asked to imagine themselves sharing the experiences of black Americans, and then to imagine their willingness to be patient. In the display below, the individual clauses are truncated to make it easy to see the whole. (The full sentence is in Appendix A.)

```
But
  when you have seen …
  when you have seen …
  when you see …
  when you suddenly find …
  when you have to concoct …
  when you take a cross-country drive and find …
  when you are humiliated …
  when your first name becomes …
  when you are harried …
  when you go forever fighting …
then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait.
```

Within this litany are phrases that emphasize the unending nature of the suffering: night after night, day in and day out, harried by day and haunted by night, never knowing what to expect, forever fighting.

This sentence deserves to be examined phrase by phrase, but it is also important for the reader to appreciate the cadence of the list of grievances, followed by the conclusion, THEN you will understand. Readers who have gone through the Declaration of Independence will see a similarity between the two documents, but King’s list is one that asks the bishops and rabbis to imagine seeing the things Black people have seen, having the experiences they have had; in Thomas Jefferson’s case, it is a list of intolerable acts by the British king: He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the life of our people.
A Strategic Approach: Looking Closely at Language in One Sentence at a Time

Could English learners and language minority students handle the complexity of the Letter? It would be a demanding text for any student, but especially for ELs and LMs. Could they handle it? Not on their own – as David Coleman has argued, it is a text that demands close and thoughtful reading and discussion. We would add that the language demands are such that many students, but especially English learners, need instructional support from teachers to discover how to gain access to the ideas, concepts, and information that are encoded in the text. Note that we do not say that students need to learn the grammatical and linguistic terms we use in explicating the examples above. Rather, they need to learn how to gain access to the ideas encoded in this complex language.

Over the past 5 years, one of us (LWF) has worked with educators in several cities (New York City, Denver, and Beaverton, OR) to develop a method for providing K-12 students with the instructional support they need to get such access, and to enable them to learn how language works in complex texts. It begins with close readings of complex texts related to topics in science and social studies in elementary and middle school, and in history and English literature in high school. The work began as a strategy for restarting the stalled efforts of English learners in NYC who were having trouble moving beyond intermediate-level English proficiency. At the heart of the strategy (which had many components) was a daily instructional session in which teachers led students in a discussion focused on a single sentence drawn from the text the class was working on.

The goal of these conversations was to help students learn to unpack the information so tightly packed into academic texts, and in so doing, gradually internalize an awareness of the relation between specific linguistic patterns and the functions they serve in texts. It begins with the selection of a sentence for each day’s conversation, the best being one that is so complex it begs for explication, is grammatically interesting, and is focused on an important point in the passage.

Examining One Sentence Closely...

After the Letter had been published, King tacked on a kind of preamble for further publications of it, explaining what he describes as the “somewhat constricted circumstance” under which it was written. Let’s consider how this sentence could be used: “Begun on the margins of the newspaper in which the statement appeared while I was in jail, the letter was continued on scraps of writing paper supplied by a friendly Negro trusty, and concluded on a pad my attorneys were eventually permitted to leave me.” An examination of this sentence shows three different “clauses” and the way in which they are organized into a complex sentence. The subject of the sentence is the letter, and the three clauses all express, in passive voice, facts about the letter’s creation: how it was begun, continued, and concluded. Superficially this sentence informs the reader about the paper on which the letter was written—what could be
more trivial? – but when we see the details it becomes clear why we think the description under somewhat constricting circumstance was a staggering understatement.

Each of the verbs begun, continued, and concluded is followed by the preposition on and a description of the writing paper and how he had access to it. We can see how elaborations of the NPs add further specifications of what is being identified by imagining a dialogue suggested by the bracketed questions in the right column (and which could usefully serve as conversational starters in an instructional conversation that begins to delve into this sentence):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Begun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>on the margins [THE MARGINS OF WHAT?]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the newspaper [WHAT NEWSPAPER?]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in which the statement appeared [WHEN WAS THAT?]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>while I was in jail,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the letter was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>continued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on scraps [SCRAPS OF WHAT?]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of writing paper [WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supplied [BY WHOM?]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by a friendly Negro trusty, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on a pad [WHERE DID HE GET THAT?]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my attorneys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>were eventually permitted to leave me. [WHO PERMITTED THEM TO LEAVE IT FOR HIM?]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a lot of material here to support a classroom conversation about why King’s situation was more than a somewhat constricting circumstance. King was allowed to see a copy of the newspaper in which his fellow clergymen urged him to slow down, but he had to use the blank spaces in the paper to start his letter; a fellow prisoner brought him scraps of writing paper to continue; and his attorneys were eventually permitted to give him a writing pad. That phrase alone gives readers a sense of the kind of world it is, one in which being in jail means you are denied even paper to write on.

The phrases and words as arrayed above provide a clear canvas for teachers to bring students’ attention to structure, and the way it carries meaning in complex texts like this one. For example, each verb in the sentence above is followed by a phrase starting with the preposition on, a phrase that describes the paper King used to write and rewrite his Letter. Each phrase ends with a modifier – each a different example of a grammatical structure that is central to academic writing: the relative clause. The first one (the newspaper in which the statement appeared), contains a relative pronoun, which. The second one (scraps of paper supplied by a friendly Negro trusty) is sometimes called a “reduced relative” because it is missing the relative pronoun which and an auxiliary verb (scraps of paper which were supplied by...). The third is
a so-called “bare relative”, because it is missing the relative pronoun which.x

Some might see these details as beside the point: why waste time with discussions of traditional grammar? Our experience tells us that these labels can give EL and LM students a sense of purchase on the complexity that confronts them, and that they relish the naming and the details of the important constructions. Consider, for example, fourth graders at a Queens elementary school on parent visiting night, xi eagerly showing their parents “relative clauses” in sentences posted on the board, based on their discussions of “juicy sentences” with such structures through the year.

The instructional conversations focus on sentences drawn, each day, from the part of the text the class is working on. These conversations require planning and thought. Preparation begins with a close examination of the focal sentence by the teacher, not necessarily in the linguistic detail shown above, but phrase by phrase to identify the information conveyed in each. Conversational starters, ideally in the form of open-ended questions or prompts, rather than ones seeking specific answers as in our analysis, are drawn up to get the discussion started. For example:

- MLK comments that his Letter had been written under “a somewhat constricting circumstance.” What does this sentence tell us about that circumstance?
- Can we tell from this sentence how the clergymen's statement affected MLK when he first read it?
- Which part of the sentence tells us that? Explain why you think that.

Questions Going Forward:

Is there any evidence that this approach works? How much time should these conversations take? Are students willing participants? Does it have any effect?

We have not had time to conduct formal research on the effectiveness of the approach, but teachers and administrators in the participating schools are convinced that the approach works, enough so that they have decided to use it for all students, and not just for ELs and LMs. That decision was prompted, not only by the increased numbers of ELs passing New York’s English language proficiency test, but by ELs actually outperforming non-EL students in the ELA test that is given each year at lab sites, and by increased percentages of students passing the Regent’s Global History test after teachers at our high school lab sites began working on language in their classes.

But how can 15 to 20 minutes spent discussing the language in just one sentence each day have such a great effect? That’s hardly enough time to make any difference at all, one might argue. And yet, it did. After participating in these instructional events for a time, the students behave as if they have been let in on a big secret – how to make sense of things that did not
make much sense before. That doesn’t mean they have mastered the intricacies of academic language yet, but knowing that they need to notice how language is used in text is the first step. We are sufficiently convinced, in large part by the success we have seen in schools, to recommend the approach to other educators who are trying to find ways to make the CCSS work for all students, including English learners and language minorities. This will require a focus on professional development to support teachers’ work with the structures in powerful texts, but that's another paper.
Appendix A
Excerpt from Martin Luther King, Jr. Letter from Birmingham Jail
“...We have waited for more than 340 years for our constitutional and God-given rights. The nations of Asia and Africa are moving with jetlike speed toward gaining political independence, but we still creep at horse-and- buggy pace toward gaining a cup of coffee at a lunch counter. Perhaps it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say, ‘Wait.’ But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate-filled policemen curse, kick and even kill your black brothers and sisters; when you see the vast majority of your twenty million Negro brothers smothering in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society; when you suddenly find your tongue twisted and your speech stammering as you seek to explain to your six-year-old daughter why she can’t go to the public amusement park that has just been advertised on television, and see tears welling up in her eyes when she is told that Funtown is closed to colored children, and see ominous clouds of inferiority beginning to form in her little mental sky, and see her beginning to distort her personality by developing an unconscious bitterness toward white people; when you have to concoct an answer for a five-year-old son who is asking: ‘Daddy, why do white people treat colored people so mean?’; when you take a cross-country drive and find it necessary to sleep night after night in the uncomfortable corners of your automobile because no motel will accept you; when you are humiliated day in and day out by nagging signs reading ‘white’ and ‘colored’; when your first name becomes ‘nigger,’ your middle name becomes ‘boy’ (however old you are) and your last name becomes ‘John,’ and your wife and mother are never given the respected title ‘Mrs.;’ when you are harried by day and haunted by night by the fact that you are a Negro, living constantly at tip toe stance, never quite knowing what to expect next, and are plagued with inner fears and outer resentments; when you go forever fighting a degenerating sense of ‘nobodiness’—then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait. There comes a time when the cup of endurance runs over, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into the abyss of despair. I hope, sirs, you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience.”


Endnotes

1 The students we are referring to as language minorities include American Indian, Alaskan natives, Latino students, and African Americans, who come from homes or communities where heritage languages are spoken, but the students themselves speak only English. Their English, however, is different enough from the standard variety on which academic discourse is based, to require instructional help getting access to the language of complex texts. The tendency in our schools when these students have literacy problems has been to see them as stemming from deficiencies in vocabulary and skills.

2 See especially:

3 See, for example, transcripts of TIMSS science lessons which can be accessed online at the (http://timssvideo.com/)

4 If an example of what we mean would be useful, try this, from H. D. Thoreau’s On Walden Pond: “The ancient philosophers, Chinese, Hindoo, Persian, and Greek, were a class than which none has been poorer in outward riches, nor so rich in inward.” Or this, from P. B. Shelley: “That the frequency of a belief in God (for it is not universal) should be any argument in its favor, none to whom the unnumerable mistakes of men are familiar, will assert” (from A Refutation of Deism, 1814).


© Stanford University
Biber, et al. (1999. LGSWE (578). Note: What we are calling informational and expository corresponds to what is described in LGSWE as academic prose & news writing.

There are many other grammatical means by which information can be packed into sentences, but in the interest of space, we have had to limit ourselves to a discussion of NPs. We would like to have discussed how the use of adverbial phrases and clauses tacked onto the main clause in sentences add information concerning the circumstances, reasoning behind, or the writer’s stance on what is communicated by the main clause. The forms they can take (adverbs, preposition phrases, clauses), and the many places they can be inserted (preceding and following the main clause, and at virtually every interstice of phrases and clauses) make them the most varied and ubiquitous structures in this kind of written language.


This was added to the Letter after its initial publication: “AUTHOR'S NOTE: This response to a published statement by eight fellow clergymen from Alabama (Bishop C. C. J. Carpenter, Bishop Joseph A. Durick, Rabbi Hilton L. Grafman, Bishop Paul Hardin, Bishop Holan B. Harmon, the Reverend George M. Murray, the Reverend Edward V. Ramage and the Reverend Earl Stallings) was composed under somewhat constricting circumstance. Begun on the margins of the newspaper in which the statement appeared while I was in jail, the letter was continued on scraps of writing paper supplied by a friendly Negro trusty, and concluded on a pad my attorneys were eventually permitted to leave me. Although the text remains in substance unaltered, I have indulged in the author's prerogative of polishing it for publication.” (http://abacus.bates.edu/admin/offices/dos/mlk/letter.html; retrieved 12/31/11)

Notice that both of the last two relative clauses contain passives. A sentence like this one should be remembered when a young writer receives advice about avoiding passive sentences at all costs.

P.S. Q-002. The school had been involved in this work on academic language development for ELs less than a year when this observation was reported. Teacher of the fourth grade class, Ms. Olga Dourmas.

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A Guide to Creating Text Dependent Questions for Close Analytic Reading

Text Dependent Questions: What Are They?

The Common Core State Standards for reading strongly focus on students gathering evidence, knowledge, and insight from what they read. Indeed, eighty to ninety percent of the Reading Standards in each grade require text dependent analysis; accordingly, aligned curriculum materials should have a similar percentage of text dependent questions.

As the name suggests, a text dependent question specifically asks a question that can only be answered by referring explicitly back to the text being read. It does not rely on any particular background information extraneous to the text nor depend on students having other experiences or knowledge; instead it privileges the text itself and what students can extract from what is before them.

For example, in a close analytic reading of Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address,” the following would not be text dependent questions:

- Why did the North fight the civil war?
- Have you ever been to a funeral or gravesite?
- Lincoln says that the nation is dedicated to the proposition that “all men are created equal.” Why is equality an important value to promote?

The overarching problem with these questions is that they require no familiarity at all with Lincoln’s speech in order to answer them. Responding to these sorts of questions instead requires students to go outside the text. Such questions can be tempting to ask because they are likely to get students talking, but they take students away from considering the actual point Lincoln is making. They seek to elicit a personal or general response that relies on individual experience and opinion, and answering them will not move students closer to understanding the text of the “Gettysburg Address.”

Good text dependent questions will often linger over specific phrases and sentences to ensure careful comprehension of the text—they help students see something worthwhile that they would not have seen on a more cursory reading. Typical text dependent questions ask students to perform one or more of the following tasks:

- Analyze paragraphs on a sentence by sentence basis and sentences on a word by word basis to determine the role played by individual paragraphs, sentences, phrases, or words
- Investigate how meaning can be altered by changing key words and why an author may have chosen one word over another
- Probe each argument in persuasive text, each idea in informational text, each key detail in literary text, and observe how these build to a whole
- Examine how shifts in the direction of an argument or explanation are achieved and the impact of those shifts
- Question why authors choose to begin and end when they do
- Note and assess patterns of writing and what they achieve
- Consider what the text leaves uncertain or unstated
Creating Text-Dependent Questions for Close Analytic Reading of Texts

An effective set of text dependent questions delves systematically into a text to guide students in extracting the key meanings or ideas found there. They typically begin by exploring specific words, details, and arguments and then moves on to examine the impact of those specifics on the text as a whole. Along the way they target academic vocabulary and specific sentence structures as critical focus points for gaining comprehension.

While there is no set process for generating a complete and coherent body of text dependent questions for a text, the following process is a good guide that can serve to generate a core series of questions for close reading of any given text.

**Step One: Identify the Core Understandings and Key Ideas of the Text**

As in any good reverse engineering or “backwards design” process, teachers should start by identifying the key insights they want students to understand from the text—keeping one eye on the major points being made is crucial for fashioning an overarching set of successful questions and critical for creating an appropriate culminating assignment.

**Step Two: Start Small to Build Confidence**

The opening questions should be ones that help orientate students to the text and be sufficiently specific enough for them to answer so that they gain confidence to tackle more difficult questions later on.

**Step Three: Target Vocabulary and Text Structure**

Locate key text structures and the most powerful academic words in the text that are connected to the key ideas and understandings, and craft questions that illuminate these connections.

**Step Four: Tackle Tough Sections Head-on**

Find the sections of the text that will present the greatest difficulty and craft questions that support students in mastering these sections (these could be sections with difficult syntax, particularly dense information, and tricky transitions or places that offer a variety of possible inferences).

**Step Five: Create Coherent Sequences of Text Dependent Questions**

The sequence of questions should not be random but should build toward more coherent understanding and analysis to ensure that students learn to stay focused on the text to bring them to a gradual understanding of its meaning.

**Step Six: Identify the Standards That Are Being Addressed**

Take stock of what standards are being addressed in the series of questions and decide if any other standards are suited to being a focus for this text (forming additional questions that exercise those standards).
Step Seven: Create the Culminating Assessment

Develop a culminating activity around the key ideas or understandings identified earlier that reflects (a) mastery of one or more of the standards, (b) involves writing, and (c) is structured to be completed by students independently.
Learning Objective: The goal of this one day exemplar is to give students the opportunity to use the reading and writing habits they’ve been practicing on a regular basis to absorb deep lessons from Kate DiCamillo’s story. By reading and rereading the passage closely and focusing their reading through a series of questions and discussion about the text, students will identify how and why the three main characters became friends.

Reading Task: Students will silently read the passage in question on a given day—first independently and then following along with the text as the teacher and/or skillful students read aloud. Depending on the difficulties of a given text and the teacher’s knowledge of the fluency abilities of students, the order of the student silent read and the teacher reading aloud with students following might be reversed. What is important is to allow all students to interact with challenging text on their own as frequently and independently as possible. Students will then reread specific passages in response to a set of concise, text-dependent questions that compel them to examine the meaning and structure of DiCamillo’s prose. Therefore, rereading is deliberately built into the instructional unit. This serves two purposes: helping less fluent readers access a more complex text than they could independently and modeling for all students the necessity and process of returning to the text in order to absorb all it has to offer.

Vocabulary Task: Most of the meanings of words in the exemplar text can be discovered by students from careful reading of the context in which they appear. Teachers can use discussions to model and reinforce how to learn vocabulary from contextual clues, and students must be held accountable for engaging in this practice. Where it is judged this is not possible, underlined words are defined briefly for students to the right of the text in a separate column whenever the original text is reproduced. At times, this is all the support these defined words need. At other times, particularly with abstract words, teachers will need to spend more time explaining and discussing them. There is a longer discussion of this in the “Vocabulary” section of the Introduction. In addition, in subsequent close readings of passages of the text, high value academic (‘Tier Two’) words have been **bolded** to draw attention to them. Given how crucial vocabulary knowledge is for academic and career success, it is essential that these high value words be discussed and lingered over during the instructional sequence.

Discussion Task: Students will discuss the exemplar text in depth with their teacher and their classmates, performing activities that result in a close reading of DiCamillo’s story. The goal is to foster student confidence when encountering complex text and to reinforce the skills they have acquired regarding how to build and extend their understanding of a text. A general principle is to always reread the passage that provides evidence for the question under discussion. This gives students another encounter with the text, helping them develop fluency and reinforcing their use of text evidence.

Writing Task: Students will respond to a series of text dependent questions and then write an informal explanatory essay. Teachers might afford students the opportunity to revise their essays after participating in classroom discussion or even rewrite their explanation after receiving teacher feedback, allowing them to refashion both their understanding of the text and their expression of that understanding.

Text Selection: This exemplar text, taken from Kate DiCamillo’s award winning novel of the same title introduces readers to some of the principal characters in the book and to the unique “talents “of the dog, Winn-Dixie.
Outline of Lesson Plan: This lesson can be delivered in two days of instruction and reflection on the part of students and their teacher, or spread over three days. Reasons for extending the discussion regarding *Because of Winn-Dixie* to three full periods of instruction include taking more time to unpack the rich array of ideas DiCamillo explores in this piece, taking more time to look closely at academic vocabulary, or even working at greater length with the writing prompt.

Standards Covered: The following CCS standards are the focus of this assignment: RL.3.1, 3-5; RF.3.3-4; W.3.2, 4-5; SL.3.1-2; L.3.1-5.
I spent a lot of time that summer at the Herman W. Block Memorial Library. The Herman W. Block Memorial Library sounds like it would be a big fancy place, but it’s not. It’s just a little old house full of books, and Miss Franny Block is in charge of them all. She is a very small, very old woman with short gray hair, and she was the first friend I made in Naomi.

It all started with Winn-Dixie not liking it when I went into the library, because he couldn’t go inside, too. But I showed him how he could stand up on his hind legs and look in the window and see me in there, selecting my books; and he was okay, as long as he could see me. But the thing was, the first time Miss Franny Block saw Winn-Dixie standing up on his hind legs like that, looking in the window, she didn’t think he was a dog. She thought he was a bear.

This is what happened: I was picking out my books and kind of humming to myself, and all of a sudden, there was a loud and scary scream. I went running up to the front of the library, and there was Miss Franny Block, sitting on the floor behind her desk.

Miss Franny sat there trembling and shaking.

“Come on,” I said. “Let me help you up. It’s okay.” I stuck out my hand and Miss Franny took hold of it, and I pulled her up off the floor. She didn’t weigh hardly anything at all. Once she was standing on her feet, she started acting all embarrassed, saying how I must think she was a silly old lady, mistaking a dog for a bear, but that she had a bad experience with a bear coming into the Herman W. Block Memorial Library a long time ago, and she never had quite gotten over it.

“When did it happen?” I asked her.

“Well,” said Miss Franny, “it is a very long story.”

“That’s okay,” I told her. “I am like my mama in that I like to be told stories. But before you start telling it, can Winn-Dixie come in and listen, too? He gets lonely without me.”

“Well, I don’t know,” said Miss Franny. “Dogs are not allowed in the Herman W. Block Memorial Library.”

“He’ll be good,” I told her. “He’s a dog who goes to church.” And before she could say yes or no, I went outside and got Winn-Dixie, and he came in and lay down with a “huuummmpppf” and a sigh, right at Miss Franny’s feet.

She looked down at him and said, “He most certainly is a large dog.”

“Yes ma’am,” I told her. “He has a large heart, too.”

“Well,” Miss Franny said. She bent over and gave Winn-Dixie a pat on the head, and Winn-Dixie wagged his tail back and forth and snuffled his nose on her little old-lady feet. “Let me get a chair and sit down so I can tell this story properly.”

“Back when Florida was wild, when it consisted of nothing but palmetto trees and mosquitoes so big they could fly away with you,” Miss Franny Block started in, “and I was just a little girl no bigger than you, my father, Herman W. Block, told me that I could have anything I wanted for my birthday. Anything at all.”

Miss Franny looked around the library. She leaned in close to me. “I don’t want to appear prideful,” she said, “but my daddy was a very rich man. A very rich man.” She nodded and then leaned back and said, “And I was a little girl who loved to read. So I told him, I said, ‘Daddy, I would most certainly love to have a library for my birthday, a small little library would be wonderful.’”
“You asked for a whole library?”
“A small one,” Miss Franny nodded. “I wanted a little house full of nothing but books and I wanted to share them, too. And I got my wish. My father built me this house, the very one we are sitting in now. And at a very young age, I became a librarian. Yes ma’am.”
“What about the bear?” I said.
“Did I mention that Florida was wild in those days?” Miss Franny Block said.
“Uh-huh, you did.”
“It was wild. There were wild men and wild women and wild animals.”
“Like bears!”
“Yes ma’am. That’s right. Now, I have to tell you. I was a little-miss-know-it-all. I was a miss-smarty-pants with my library full of books. Oh, yes ma’am, I thought I knew the answers to everything. Well, one hot Thursday, I was sitting in my library with all the doors and window open and my nose stuck in a book, when a shadow crossed the desk. And without looking up, yes ma’am, without even looking up, I said, ‘Is there a book I can help you find?’
“Well, there was no answer. And I thought it might have been a wild man or a wild woman, scared of all these books and afraid to speak up. But then I became aware of a very peculiar smell, a very strong smell. I raised my eyes slowly. And standing right in front of me was a bear. Yes ma’am. A very large bear.”
“How big?” I asked.
“Oh, well,” said Miss Franny, “perhaps three times the size of your dog.”
“Then what happened?” I asked her.
“Well,” said Miss Franny, “I looked at him and he looked at me. He put his big nose up in the air and sniffed and sniffed as if he was trying to decide if a little-miss-know-it-all librarian was what he was in the mood to eat. And I sat there. And then I thought, ‘Well, if this bear intends to eat me, I am not going to let it happen without a fight. No ma’am.’ So very slowly and carefully, I raised up the book I was reading.”
“What book was that?” I asked.
“Why, it was War and Peace, a very large book. I raised it up slowly and then I aimed it carefully and I threw it right at that bear and screamed, ‘Be gone!’ And do you know what?”
“No ma’am,” I said.
“He went. But this is what I will never forget. He took the book with him.”
“Nu-uh,” I said.
“Yes ma’am,” said Miss Franny. “He snatched it up and ran.”
“Did he come back?” I asked.
“No, I never saw him again. Well, the men in town used to tease me about it. They used to say, ‘Miss Franny, we saw that bear of yours out in the woods today. He was reading that book and he said it sure was good and would it be all right if he kept it for just another week.’ Yes ma’am. They did tease me about it.” She said. “I imagine I’m the only one left from those days. I imagine I’m the only one that even recalls that bear. All my friends, everyone I knew when I was young, they are all dead and gone.”
She sighed again. She looked sad and old and wrinkled. It was the same way I felt sometimes, being friendless in a new town and not having a mama to comfort me. I sighed, too.

Winn-Dixie raised his head off his paws and looked back and forth between me and Miss Franny. He sat up then and showed Miss Franny his teeth.
“Well now, look at that,” she said. “That dog is smiling at me.”
“It’s a talent of his,” I told her.
“It’s a fine talent,” Miss Franny said. A very fine talent.” And she smiled back at
“We could be friends,” I said to Miss Franny. “I mean you and me and Winn-Dixie, we could all be friends.”

Miss Franny smiled even bigger. “Why, that would be grand,” she said, “just grand.”

And right at that minute, right when the three of us had decided to be friends, who should come marching into the Herman W. Block Memorial Library but old pinch-faced Amanda Wilkinson. She walked right up to Miss Franny’s desk and said, “I finished *Johnny Tremain* and I enjoyed it very much. I would like something even more difficult to read now, because I am an advanced reader.”

“Yes dear, I know,” said Miss Franny. She got up out of her chair. Amanda pretended like I wasn’t there. She stared right past me. “Are dogs allowed in the library?” she asked Miss Franny as they walked away.

“Certain ones,” said Miss Franny, “a select few.” And then she turned around and winked at me. I smiled back. I had just made my first friend in Naomi, and nobody was going to mess that up for me, not even old pinch-faced Amanda Wilkinson.
**Day One: Instructional Exemplar for DiCamillo’s *Because of Winn-Dixie***

**Summary of Activities**

1. Teacher introduces the day’s passage with minimal commentary and students read it independently.
2. Teacher or a skillful reader then reads the passage out loud to the class as students follow along in the text. Teachers can reverse numbers 1 and 2 if they feel students need the support of hearing the text read aloud first.
3. Teacher asks the class to discuss the first set of text-dependent questions and perform targeted tasks about the passage, with answers in the form of notes, annotations to the text, or more formal responses as appropriate.

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2. **Read the passage out loud to the class as students follow along in the text.** Asking students to listen to *Because of Winn-Dixie* exposes students a second time to the rhythms and meaning of her language before they begin their own close reading of the passage. Speaking clearly and carefully will allow students to follow DiCamillo’s story, and reading out loud with students following along improves fluency while offering all students access to this complex text. Accurate and skillful modeling of the reading also provides students who may be dysfluent with accurate pronunciations and syntactic patterns of English. |
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“Come on,” I said. “Let me help you up. It’s okay.” I stuck out my hand and Miss Franny took hold of it, and I pulled her up off the floor. She didn’t weigh hardly anything at all. Once she was standing on her feet, she started acting all embarrassed, saying how I must think she was a silly old lady, mistaking a dog for a bear, but that she had a bad experience with a bear coming into the Herman W. Block Memorial Library a long time ago, and she never had quite gotten over it.

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“You asked for a whole library?”

“A small one,” Miss Franny nodded. “I wanted a little house full of nothing but books and I wanted to share them, too. And I got my wish. My father built me this house, the very one we are sitting in now. And at a very young age, I became a librarian. Yes ma’am.”

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3. Ask the class to answer a small set of text-dependent guided questions and perform targeted tasks about the passage, with answers in the form of notes, annotations to the text, or more formal responses as appropriate.

As students move through these questions and reread DiCamillo’s story, be sure to check for and reinforce their understanding of academic vocabulary in the corresponding text (which will be **boldfaced** the first time it appears in the text). At times, the questions themselves may focus on academic vocabulary.

**Q1** Why was Miss Franny so scared by Winn-Dixie? Why was she “acting all embarrassed?”

Miss Franny thought Winn-Dixie was a bear. When she realized he was a dog, she was embarrassed because she thought Opal would think she was a “silly old lady, mistaking a dog for a bear.”

**Q2** How did the Herman W. Block Memorial Library come to get its name?

The library was a gift to Miss Franny from her wealthy father. When she was a little girl, “a very rich man” told her she could have “anything she wants” for her birthday. So, Miss Franny asked for a library. She wanted a “little house full of nothing but books”. Herman W. Block was Miss Franny’s father.

Both events are fairly straightforward, but it is important for students to understand them, as they set the stage for what is to come.
“He went. But this is what I will never forget. He took the book with him.”
“Nu-uh,” I said.
“Yes ma’am,” said Miss Franny. “He snatched it up and ran.”
“Did he come back?” I asked.
“No, I never saw him again. Well, the men in town used to tease me about it. They used to say, ‘Miss Franny, we saw that bear of yours out in the woods today. He was reading that book and he said it sure was good and would it be all right if he kept it for just another week.’ Yes ma’am. They did tease me about it.” She said. “I imagine I’m the only one left from those days. I imagine I’m the only one that even recalls that bear. All my friends, everyone I knew when I was young, they are all dead and gone.”

She sighed again. She looked sad and old and wrinkled. It was the same way I felt sometimes, being friendless in a new town and not having a mama to comfort me. I sighed, too.

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“Winn-Dixie raised his head off his paws and looked back and forth between me and Miss Franny. He sat up then and showed Miss Franny his teeth. ‘Well now, look at that,’ she said. ‘That dog is smiling at me.’”

Questions 3-5 trace the sequence of events that led to the three characters becoming friends and prepare students for the writing prompt at the end of the lesson.

(Q3) Opal says, “She looked sad and old and wrinkled.”

What happened to cause Miss Franny to look this way?

Students should realize that she was thinking about friends and people who are no longer alive, and that she does not have any friends now: “All my friends, everyone I knew when I was young, they are all dead and gone.”

(Q4) What were Opal’s feelings when she realized how Miss Franny felt?

Students should realize that Opal felt she and Miss Franny were both lonely: “It was the same way I felt . . . friendless . . .”

(Q5) Earlier in the story, Opal says that Winn-Dixie “has a large heart, too.” What does Winn-Dixie do to show that he has a “large heart”?

Students should see that Winn-Dixie was responding to Opal and Miss Franny feeling sad when he looked between them and showed Miss Franny his teeth: “Winn-Dixie raised his head off his paws and looked back and forth between me and Miss Franny. He sat up then and showed Miss Franny his teeth. ‘Well now, look at that,’ she said. ‘That dog is smiling at me.’”
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“It’s a talent of his,” I told her.

“It’s a fine talent,” Miss Franny said. A very fine talent.” And she smiled back at Winn-Dixie.

“We could be friends,” I said to Miss Franny. “I mean you and me and Winn-Dixie, we could all be friends.”

Directions for Teachers/Guiding Questions For Students

(Q6) Opal and Miss Franny have three very important things in common - What are these?

- As noted in question 4, both characters are lonely.
- In the very first sentence of the passage, Opal says, “I spent a lot of time that summer at the Herman W. Block Memorial Library.” Therefore, it is a reasonable inference that Opal likes books. Similarly, Miss Franny said, “When I was a little girl I loved to read.” And when told that she could have anything she wanted for her birthday, she replied, “. . . I would most certainly love to have a library.”
- Opal, of course, likes Winn-Dixie, and there is evidence that Miss Franny does as well: “Well now look at that . . . ‘That dog is smiling at me.’” Also, “. . . she smiled back at Winn-Dixie.”
### Directions for Teachers and Students / Guidance for Teachers

The title of this selection is *Because of Winn-Dixie*. Using your answers from the questions above and class discussion, explain why this is an appropriate title for the selection. Be sure to clearly cite evidence from the text for each part of your answer.

A proficient answer should have at least two parts:

- Students should explain - using evidence from the text - how Winn-Dixie looking into the library was the cause of Miss Franny falling, which in turn led to the story about the bear and Opal’s realization that she and Miss Franny were both lonely.
- They should then relate how Winn-Dixie’s response to Miss Franny (“That dog is smiling at me”) endeared her to Winn-Dixie and led Opal to suggest that they could be friends.

The answer should show a clear understanding of how this progression of events led to the three characters becoming friends. An answer pulling on more from the text would include that Winn-Dixie’s “talent” and “huge heart” were traits that made all this possible.
Examples of NON-TEXT DEPENDENT QUESIONS

Was there ever a time where an animal scared you?

Should Ms. Franny have felt embarrassed?

Can bears really eat people?

From basals

• As you read this story think about plants and animals in Florida

• How can an older woman make her library safe from unwanted visitors

• This author has won prizes for her books. Why? Find a part of this story you think could win a prize. — This of course asks the student to have a grasp of the criteria that publishers use in awarding prizes

• Then of course there was the activities in the TE in the Differentiated Instruction section asking students to do research on wildlife and plant life in Florida and how to safeguard libraries from “unwanted visitors”

• In Because of Winn-Dixie Opal tells about her experiences after moving to a new town. Think about a time that you were a newcomer to a place or situation. Now use vivid words to write a memoir about that experience. --- In addition to having very little to do with the selection this question assumes that all 4th or 5th graders have had that experience. More insidiously and as with all these questions it privileges students who have discussed these types of questions with adults- usually children from more educated families.
Examples of TEXT DEPENDENT BUT TRIVIAL QUESTIONS

What book was Miss Franny reading when the bear came into the library?
What did the men say when they were teasing Miss Fanny?
Why was Miss Franny sitting on the floor when Amanda met her?
What did Miss Franny say when Amanda asked if dogs were allowed in the library?
Richard Feynman - “The Making of a Scientist” - Grade 6


Learning Objective: The goal of this two to three day exemplar is to give students the opportunity to use the reading and writing habits they’ve been practicing on a regular basis to absorb deep lessons from Richard Feynman’s recollections of interactions with his father. By reading and rereading the passage closely, and focusing their reading through a series of questions and discussion about the text, students will identify how and why Feynman started to look at the world through the eyes of a scientist. When combined with writing about the passage, students will discover how much they can learn from a memoir.

Reading Task: Students will silently read the passage in question on a given day—first independently and then following along with the text as the teacher and/or skillful students read aloud. Depending on the difficulties of a given text and the teacher’s knowledge of the fluency abilities of students, the order of the student silent read and the teacher reading aloud with students following might be reversed. What is important is to allow all students to interact with challenging text on their own as frequently and independently as possible. Students will then reread specific passages in response to a set of concise, text-dependent questions that compel them to examine the meaning and structure of Feynman’s prose. Therefore, rereading is deliberately built into the instructional unit.

Vocabulary Task: Most of the meanings of words in the exemplar text can be discovered by students from careful reading of the context in which they appear. Teachers can use discussions to model and reinforce how to learn vocabulary from contextual clues, and students must be held accountable for engaging in this practice. Where it is judged this is not possible, underlined words are defined briefly for students to the right of the text in a separate column whenever the original text is reproduced. At times, this is all the support these defined words need. At other times, particularly with abstract words, teachers will need to spend more time explaining and discussing them. In addition, in subsequent close readings of passages of the text, high value academic (‘Tier Two’) words have been bolded to draw attention to them. Given how crucial vocabulary knowledge is for academic and career success, it is essential that these high value words be discussed and lingered over during the instructional sequence.

Sentence Syntax Task: On occasion students will encounter particularly difficult sentences to decode. Teachers should engage in a close examination of such sentences to help students discover how they are built and how they convey meaning. While many questions addressing important aspects of the text double as questions about syntax, students should receive regular supported practice in deciphering complex sentences. It is crucial that the help they receive in unpacking text complexity focuses both on the precise meaning of what the author is saying and why the author might have constructed the sentence in this particular fashion. That practice will in turn support students’ ability to unpack meaning from syntactically complex sentences they encounter in future reading.

Discussion Task: Students will discuss the exemplar text in depth with their teacher and their classmates, performing activities that result in a close reading of Feynman’s memoir. The goal is to foster student confidence when encountering complex text and to reinforce the skills they have acquired regarding how to build and extend their understanding of a text. A general principle is to always reread the passage that provides evidence for the question under discussion. This gives students another encounter with the text, helping them develop fluency and reinforcing their use of text evidence.
**Writing Task:** Students will paraphrase different sentences and paragraphs of Feynman’s memoir and then write an informal explanatory essay detailing how one of the interactions between him and his father illustrates a deeper lesson. Teachers might afford students the opportunity to revise their in-class paraphrases after participating in classroom discussion or even rewrite their explanation after receiving teacher feedback, allowing them to refashion both their understanding of the text and their expression of that understanding.

**Text Selection:** This exemplar text, taken from the highly regarded children’s magazine *Cricket*, speaks directly and without condescension to students about why Feynman became a scientist. The clear and compelling examples offer vivid and concrete avenues for exploration and close reading.

**Outline of Lesson Plan:** This lesson can be delivered in two days of instruction and reflection on the part of students and their teacher, or spread over three days.

**Standards Covered:** The following Common Core State Standards are the focus of this assignment: RI.4-5.1, 2, 4 & 8; W.4-5.2 & 9; SL.4-5.1; L.4-5.4-6.
Before I was born, my father told my mother, “If it’s a boy, he’s going to be a scientist.” When I was just a little kid, very small in a highchair, my father brought home a lot of little bathroom tiles—seconds—of different colors. We played with them, my father setting them up vertically on my highchair like dominoes, and I would push one end so they would all go down.

Then after a while, I’d help set them up. Pretty soon, we’re setting them up in a more complicated way: two white tiles and a blue tile, two white tiles and a blue tile, and so on. When my mother saw that she said, “Leave the poor child alone. If he wants to put a blue tile, let him put a blue tile.”

But my father said, “No, I want to show him what patterns are like and how interesting they are. It’s a kind of elementary mathematics.” So he started very early to tell me about the world and how interesting it is.

We had the Encyclopaedia Britannica at home. When I was a small boy he used to sit me on his lap and read to me from the Britannica. We would be reading, say, about dinosaurs. It would be talking about the Tyrannosaurus rex, and it would say something like, “This dinosaur is twenty-five feet high and its head is six feet across.”

My father would stop reading and say, “Now, let’s see what that means. That would mean that if he stood in our front yard, he would be tall enough to put his head through our window up here.” (We were on the second floor.) “But his head would be too wide to fit in the window.” Everything he read to me he would translate as best he could into some reality.

It was very exciting and very, very interesting to think there were animals of such magnitude—and that they all died out, and that nobody knew why. I wasn’t frightened that there would be one coming in my window as a consequence of this. But I learned from my father to translate: everything I read I try to figure out what it really means, what it’s really saying.

We used to go to the Catskill Mountains, a place where people from New York City would go in the summer. The fathers would all return to New York to work during the week and come back only for the weekend. On weekends, my father would take me for walks in the woods and he’d tell me about interesting things that were going on in the woods. When the other mothers saw this, they thought it was wonderful and that the other fathers should take their sons for walks. They tried to work on them but they didn’t get anywhere at first. They wanted my father to take all the kids, but he didn’t want to because he had a special relationship with me. So it ended up that the other fathers had to take their children for walks the next weekend.

The next Monday, when the fathers were all back at work, we kids were playing in a large set of books covering all sorts of knowledge.

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field. One kid says to me, “See that bird? What kind of bird is that?”
I said, “I haven’t the slightest idea what kind of a bird it is.”
He says, “It’s a brown-throated thrush. Your father doesn’t teach you anything!”
But it was the opposite. He had already taught me: “See that bird?” he says. “It’s a
Spencer’s warbler.” (I knew he didn’t know the real name.) “Well, in Italian, it’s a Chutto Lapittida. In Portuguese it’s a Bom da Peida. In Chinese, it’s a Chung-long-tah, and in
Japanese, it’s a Katano Tekeda. You can know the name of the bird in all the languages of the
world, but when you’re finished, you’ll know absolutely nothing whatever about the bird.
You’ll only know about humans in different places, and what they call the bird. So let’s look
at the bird and see what it’s doing—that’s what counts.” (I learned very early the difference
between knowing the name of something and knowing something.)
He said, “For example, look: the bird pecks at its feathers all the time. See it walking
around, pecking at its feathers?”
“Yeah.”
He says, “Why do you think birds peck at their feathers?”
I said, “Well, maybe they mess up their feathers when they fly, so they’re pecking
them in order to straighten them out.”
“All right,” he says. “If that were the case, then they would peck a lot just after
they’ve been flying. Then, after they’ve been on the ground a while, they wouldn’t peck so
much anymore—you know what I mean?”
“Yeah.”
He says, “Let’s look and see if they peck more just after they land.”
It wasn’t hard to tell: there was not much difference between the birds that had been
walking around a bit and those that had just landed. So I said, “I give up. Why does a bird
peck at its feathers?”
“Because there are lice bothering it,” he says. “The lice eat flakes of protein that
come off its feathers.”
He continued, “Each louse has some waxy stuff on its legs, and little mites eat that.
The mites don’t digest it perfectly, so they emit from their rear ends a sugarlike material, in
which bacteria grow.”
Finally he says, “So you see, everywhere there’s a source of food, there’s some form
of life that finds it.”
Now, I knew that it may not have been exactly a louse, that it might not be exactly
true that the louse’s legs have mites. That story was probably incorrect in detail, but what he
was telling me was right in principle.
Not having experience with many fathers, I didn’t realize how remarkable he was.
How did he learn the deep principles of science and the love of it, what’s behind it, and why
it’s worth doing? I never really asked him, because I just assumed that those were things that
fathers knew.
My father taught me to notice things. One day, I was playing with an “express
wagon,” a little wagon with a railing around it. It had a ball in it, and when I pulled the
wagon, I noticed something about the way the ball moved. I went to my father and said, “Say,
Pop, I noticed something. When I pull the wagon, the ball rolls to the back of the wagon. And when I’m pulling it along and I **suddenly** stop, the ball rolls to the front of the wagon. Why is that?”

“That, nobody knows,” he said. “The general principle is that things which are moving **tend** to keep on moving, and things which are standing still tend to stand still, unless you push them hard. This **tendency** is called ‘**inertia**,’ but nobody knows why it’s true.”

Now, that’s a deep understanding. He didn’t just give me the name.

He went on to say, “If you look from the side, you’ll see that it’s the back of the wagon that you’re pulling against the ball, and the ball stands still. As a matter of fact, from the **friction** it starts to move forward a little bit in **relation** to the ground. It doesn’t move back.”

I ran back to the little wagon and set the ball up again and pulled the wagon. Looking sideways, I saw that indeed he was right. **Relative** to the sidewalk, it moved forward a little bit.

That’s the way I was educated by my father, with those kinds of examples and discussions: no pressure—just lovely, interesting discussions. It has **motivated** me for the rest of my life, and makes me interested in all the sciences. (It just happens I do physics better.)

I’ve been caught, so to speak—like someone who was given something wonderful when he was a child, and he’s always looking for it again. I’m always looking, like a child, for the wonders I know I’m going to find—maybe not every time, but every once in a while.

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### Day One: Instructional Exemplar for Feynman’s “The Making of a Scientist”

**Summary of Activities**
1. Teacher introduces the day’s passage with minimal commentary and students read it independently.
2. Teacher or a skillful reader then reads the passage out loud to the class as students follow along in the text.
3. Teacher asks the class to discuss the first set of text-dependent questions and perform targeted tasks about the passage, with answers in the form of notes, annotations to the text, or more formal responses as appropriate.
4. For homework, teacher asks students to reread the passage and refine their answers to the questions.

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<td>1. <strong>Introduce the passage and students read independently.</strong> Other than giving the brief definitions offered to words students would likely not be able to define from context (underlined in the text), avoid giving any background context or instructional guidance at the outset of the lesson while students are reading the text silently. This close reading approach forces students to rely exclusively on the text instead of privileging background knowledge and levels the playing field for all students as they seek to comprehend Feynman’s memoir. It is critical to cultivating independence and creating a culture of close reading that students initially grapple with rich texts like Feynman’s prose without the aid of prefatory material, extensive notes, or even teacher explanations.</td>
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<td>But it was the opposite. He had already taught me: “See that bird?” he says. “It’s a Spencer’s warbler.” (I knew he didn’t know the real name.) “Well, in Italian, it’s a Chutto Lapittida. In Portuguese it’s a Bom da Peida. In Chinese, it’s a Chung-long-tah, and in Japanese, it’s a Katano Tekeda. You can know the name of the bird in all the languages of the world, but when you’re finished, you’ll know absolutely nothing whatever about the bird. You’ll only know about humans in different places, and what they call the bird. So let’s look at the bird and see what it’s doing—that’s what counts.” (I learned very early the difference between knowing the name of something and knowing something.)</td>
<td>2. <strong>Read the passage out loud to the class as students follow along in the text.</strong> Asking students to listen to “The Making of a Scientist” exposes students a second time to the rhythms and meaning of his language before they begin their own close reading of the passage. Speaking clearly and carefully will allow students to follow Feynman’s narrative, and reading out loud with students following along improves fluency while offering all students access to this complex text. Accurate and skillful modeling of the reading provides students who may be dysfluent with accurate pronunciations and syntactic patterns of English.</td>
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It was very exciting and very, very interesting to think there were animals of such magnitude—and that they all died out, and that nobody knew why. I wasn’t frightened that there would be one coming in my window as a consequence of this. But I learned from my father to translate: everything I read I try to figure out what it really means, what it’s really saying.

3. Ask the class to answer a small set of text-dependent guided questions and perform targeted tasks about the passage, with answers in the form of notes, annotations to the text, or more formal responses as appropriate.

As students move through these questions and re-read Feynman’s memoir, be sure to check for and reinforce their understanding of academic vocabulary in the corresponding text (which will be boldfaced the first time it appears in the text). At times, the questions themselves may focus on academic vocabulary.

(Q1) What was Feynman’s father trying to teach his son with the tiles? What sentence is the main point of this scene?

Students will likely say that he was teaching his son about patterns or possibly that he was teaching him math. Teachers should ask students to go back into the text to find the main point—something even more important than patterns and math that his father was trying to teach him: “he started very early to tell me about the world and how interesting it is.”

Ask students to put the last paragraph of the text passage (“It was very exciting”) into their own words.

The message Feynman is trying to convey by the dinosaur example aligns quite well with this task: when you read something you must translate it so you truly understand it. His choice of words like “magnitude” and “consequence” are deliberate and reflect the deep meaning of these words (“magnitude” implies both size and importance, for example). Students should investigate whether their synonyms for these words capture the full sense of what Feynman is implying. If time permits, after students share their answers with one another and the class, students could be offered the opportunity to rewrite their paraphrase.

Sidebar: Website on Tyrannosaurus rex

If students are intrigued to learn more about Tyrannosaurus rex, teachers can direct them to the informative National Geographic webpage on that dinosaur: http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/prehistoric/tyrannosaurus-rex/
We used to go to the Catskill Mountains, a place where people from New York City would go in the summer. The fathers would all return to New York to work during the week and come back only for the weekend. On weekends, my father would take me for walks in the woods and he’d tell me about interesting things that were going on in the woods. When the other mothers saw this, they thought it was wonderful and that the other fathers should take their sons for walks. They tried to work on them but they didn’t get anywhere at first. They wanted my father to take all the kids, but he didn’t want to because he had a special relationship with me. So it ended up that the other fathers had to take their children for walks the next weekend.

The next Monday, when the fathers were all back at work, we kids were playing in a field. One kid says to me, “See that bird? What kind of bird is that?”

I said, “I haven’t the slightest idea what kind of a bird it is.”

He says, “It’s a brown-throated thrush. Your father doesn’t teach you anything!”

But it was the opposite. He had already taught me: “See that bird?” he says. “It’s a Spencer’s warbler.” (I knew he didn’t know the real name.) “Well, in Italian, it’s a *Chutto Lapittida*. In Portuguese it’s a *Bom da Peida*. In Chinese, it’s a *Chung-long-tah*, and in Japanese, it’s a *Katano Tekeda*. You can know the name of the bird in all the languages of the world, but when you’re finished, you’ll know absolutely nothing whatever about the bird. You’ll only know about humans in different places, and what they call the bird. So let’s look at the bird and see what it’s doing—that’s what counts.” (I learned very early the difference between knowing the name of something and knowing something.)

(Q2) In this section of the text, Feynman put the word “doing” (in the final paragraph) in italics to draw attention to it. Why is he focusing on that word, and how does it connect to the lesson his father is trying to teach him in this example?

Feynman’s father is trying to draw a distinction between recalling the name of a bird and genuinely knowing something about birds. The example is meant to illustrate that while the same bird is called different things in different languages, knowing the names of the bird (even made up names) doesn’t tell you anything about the bird—only about what humans have called it. For Feynman, what really matters—the difference between knowing the name of something and knowing something—is captured in knowing what a bird does.
**Day Two: Instructional Exemplar for Feynman’s “The Making of a Scientist”**

**Summary of Activities**
1. Teacher introduces the day’s passage with minimal commentary and students read it independently.
2. Teacher or a skillful reader then reads the passage out loud to the class as students follow along in the text.
3. Teacher asks the class to discuss text-dependent questions and perform targeted tasks about the passage, with answers in the form of notes, annotations to the text, or more formal responses as appropriate.
4. Teacher assigns homework that asks students to write an explanation of one of Feynman’s examples and the lesson it represents.

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| He said, “For example, look: the bird pecks at its feathers all the time. See it walking around, pecking at its feathers?” | **(Q3) Why does Feynman’s father tell him about the lice and the mites on birds?**  
Students should connect the lesson learned in the previous example—to know something is to know why it does something—to this one. The bird does something, namely pecks at its feathers. To know the bird would be to know why it pecks, and his father explores Feynman’s tentative answer with him before offering up his explanation. |
| “Yeah.” He says, “Why do you think birds peck at their feathers?” I said, “Well, maybe they mess up their feathers when they fly, so they’re pecking them in order to straighten them out.” “All right,” he says. “If that were the case, then they would peck a lot just after they’ve been flying. Then, after they’ve been on the ground a while, they wouldn’t peck so much anymore—you know what I mean?” “Yeah.” He says, “Let’s look and see if they peck more just after they land.” It wasn’t hard to tell: there was not much difference between the birds that had been walking around a bit and those that had just landed. So I said, “I give up. Why does a bird peck at its feathers?” “Because there are lice bothering it,” he says. “The lice eat flakes of protein that come off its feathers.” He continued, “Each louse has some waxy stuff on its legs, and little mites eat that. The mites don’t digest it perfectly, so they emit from their rear ends a sugarlike material, in which bacteria grow.” Finally he says, “So you see, everywhere there’s a source of food, there’s some form of life that finds it.” Now, I knew that it may not have been exactly a louse, that it might not be exactly true that the louse’s legs have mites. That story was probably incorrect in detail, but what he was telling me was right in principle. | **(Q4) Feynman’s father says, “So you see, everywhere there’s a source of food there’s some form of life that finds it”. Explain what is meant by this sentence and why “some” is in italics.**  
This is another good comprehension question to test and see if students truly understand Feynman’s point about knowing. To his earlier insight about truly knowing something, this example adds the further point that knowledge of the principle in question is key. The details—like the names of the birds or the relationship between lice and mites—might be incorrect in the particulars. But to Feynman and his father, what really mattered was the discovery of the principle that some form of life (no matter how small or insignificant) will utilize an available source of food. |
Not having experience with many fathers, I didn’t realize how remarkable he was. How did he learn the deep principles of science and the love of it, what’s behind it, and why it’s worth doing? I never really asked him, because I just assumed that those were things that fathers knew.

My father taught me to notice things. One day, I was playing with an “express wagon,” a little wagon with a railing around it. It had a ball in it, and when I pulled the wagon, I noticed something about the way the ball moved. I went to my father and said, “Say, Pop, I noticed something. When I pull the wagon, the ball rolls to the back of the wagon. And when I’m pulling it along and I suddenly stop, the ball rolls to the front of the wagon. Why is that?”

“That, nobody knows,” he said. “The general principle is that things which are moving tend to keep on moving, and things which are standing still tend to stand still, unless you push them hard. This tendency is called ‘inertia,’ but nobody knows why it’s true.” Now, that’s a deep understanding. He didn’t just give me the name.

I ran back to the little wagon and set the ball up again and pulled the wagon. Looking sideways, I saw that indeed he was right. Relative to the sidewalk, it moved forward a little bit.

That’s the way I was educated by my father, with those kinds of examples and discussions: no pressure—just lovely, interesting discussions. It has motivated me for the rest of my life, and makes me interested in all the sciences. (It just happens I do physics better.)

I’ve been caught, so to speak—like someone who was given something wonderful when he was a child, and he’s always looking for it again. I’m always looking, like a child, for the wonders I know I’m going to find—maybe not every time, but every once in a while.

(Q5) After re-reading the section of the text on the wagon and ball example, ask students to engage in this experiment themselves if materials allow, or to guide the teacher in physically re-creating it or a similar experiment that illustrates the law of inertia.

Feynman’s example shows the principle behind inertia—“that things which are moving tend to keep on moving, and things which are standing still tend to stand still”—a point he stressed in his explanation of what it means to know something. Teachers should note that Feynman’s father is quick to confess to not knowing why there is a law of inertia (“nobody knows”), but does explain the law through an example that he then uses to extract a “general principle.”

Sidebar: Website on Inertia

The following website has several helpful videos on the law of inertia:


(Q6) In the final paragraph Feynman says he “was given something wonderful when he was a child.” Using two of the examples from the text, explain what he was given and how it influenced his life.

Feynman beautifully discusses how his father “educated” him and how it “motivated me for the rest of my life.” What his father gave him was “lovely, interesting discussions” that “caught” his imagination as a child to such a degree that Feynman is “always looking for” those kinds of discussions.

Answering this question will require students to draw material from throughout the text and will be very useful to students when they transition to the writing assignment. Students should cite the principle Feynman’s father was trying to convey in each example (“try to figure out what [I read] really means”; “the difference between knowing the name of something and knowing something”).
Explanatory Writing Assignment: Directions for Teachers and Students / Guidance for Teachers

For homework, pick one of the examples that Feynman uses in his piece (the dinosaur, the birds, or the wagon) and in 2-3 paragraphs explain both the example and the lesson Feynman’s father was trying to teach him with it.

Teachers should direct students back to their notes as each of the examples will have been discussed at some length. Like Feynman, many students will organize their analysis by starting with the example and then deriving from it the lesson being taught, but it’s perfectly valid if some students start with the lesson and then cite the example as an instance of the lesson learned.

Teachers may find it helpful to take one of the examples and develop notes on it (or divide the class into groups to do the same) so that students have a clear sense of how to develop the writing assignment with a rich use of the examples. This example could then be put “off limits” to students capable of this work independently but used as scaffolding for students who need more support.

Extension Activity for Day Three: During the next class period, the teacher could have students peer review or revise the explanatory writing pieces completed for homework.

This work was supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
1. What is one rationale for the shift to an emphasis on informational text?
   a. Literacy does not have a role in science and technology, history and social studies, or in classes focused on the Arts.
   b. The standards require that students work on literacy in all the content areas, not as a distraction or as an addition to their study of content, but to build their understanding of the content they are studying.
   c. Students must be required to read about the world even if they find it uninteresting.
   d. Reading informational text is much easier than reading literature.

2. Close reading of text:
   a. Is another way of describing sustained silent reading.
   b. Cannot occur until students have developed good reading comprehension.
   c. Requires students to be actively involved in the text they read.
   d. Does not appear in the CCSS for ELA/Literacy until students are in high school.

3. What can an educator do to support all readers?
   a. Identify the reading needs of all students.
   b. Share the responsibility for providing explicit targeted instruction.
   c. Commit to teaching every student to read complex text and read it well.
   d. All of the above

4. Which of the following is not a dimension for determining text complexity?
   a. Task and reader considerations
   b. Quantitative dimensions
   c. Descriptive and figurative language
   d. Qualitative dimensions

5. Lexiles measure
   a. An individual’s reading ability or the difficulty of a text
   b. To what extent a text is informative or literary
   c. Improvement in a school’s reading scores
   d. All of the above

6. What should students focus on when doing a close reading?
   a. The author’s meaning, purpose, and argument
   b. The way the text is structured
   c. Gaining a deep understanding of the text
   d. All of the above
7. The CCSS for ELA/Literacy in Reading Informational Text emphasize all of the following skills EXCEPT
   a. Actively listening to a lecture that summarizes a text’s main points in a pre-reading activity
   b. Determining what the text says explicitly and cite textual evidence to support conclusions
   c. Comparing how two or more texts discuss the same topic
   d. Determining central ideas and details and being able to summarize them

8. The questions asked during a close reading
   a. Guide the reader to predict what the text will be about before the reading begins
   b. Direct the reader to better understand and analyze the text
   c. Connect the reader to a real-life situation
   d. Help the reader understand the text independently the first time

9. What does Appendix B of the CCSS contain?
   a. Writing resources for teachers
   b. Video resources for students
   c. Text exemplars and performance tasks
   d. Research that supports the new standards

10. The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards
    a. Apply to literary text
    b. Apply to informational text
    c. Apply to both informational and literary text
    d. Apply to the Career Technical Education Standards